

**Policy 3300, Public Charter Schools
Executive Summary**

**West Virginia Department of Education
Office of Legal Services**

Policy Cycle: 30 day Comment Period Adoption of Policy

Policy Process: Revision Repeal and Replace New Repeal

Introduction: This is a new policy to implement the provisions of W.Va. Code §18-5G-1, et seq.

Background: The Legislature enacted W.Va. Code §18-5G-1, et seq., via HB206, which provided for the establishment of charter public schools.

Proposals: Policy 3300 was written to implement the provisions of W.Va. Code §18-5G-1, et seq. and to clarify ambiguities in the statutory language. The policy outlines and details the duties and responsibilities of charter applicants, charter school authorizers (county boards of education), charter school governing boards, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the West Virginia Board of Education.

Impact: Upon a showing of meeting the requirements outlined in the policy, which are substantially based on the statutory requirements, authorizers (county boards of education) will be permitted to authorize the establishment of public charter schools.

Action:

Release for 30 day public comment
 Approved by WVBE with effective date of ____/____/2019

Policy 3300, Public Charter Schools
List of Stakeholders

West Virginia Department of Education

West Virginia Stakeholders

- Fred Albert, American Federation of Teachers-WV (AFT-WV)
- Mickey Blackwell, WV Association of Elementary/Middle School Principals (WVAEMSP)
- Eddie Campbell, Monongalia County
- Susan Collins, WV Association of School Administrators (WVASA)
- Bobbi Ferrell, Jackson County
- David Gladkosky, WV Professional Educators (WVPE)
- Hank Hager, West Virginia Senate
- Blaine Hess, Jackson County
- Joshua Higginbotham, West Virginia House of Delegates
- Sarah Koegler, Ohio County
- Dale Lee, WV Education Association (WVEA)
- Casey Long, West Virginia Senate
- Kris Mallory, American Federation of Teachers-WV (AFT-WV)
- Kim Miller, Ohio County
- Howard O'Cull, West Virginia School Board Association (WVSBA)
- Kim Randolph, WV Education Association (WVEA)
- Rollan Roberts, West Virginia Senate
- Ryan Saxe, Cabell County
- Rhonda Smalley, Cabell County
- Shandon Tweedy, Horace Mann Middle School
- Danielle Waltz, Ed Choice

West Virginia Department of Education Staff

- Dr. Steven L. Paine, State Superintendent of Schools
- W. Clayton Burch, Associate State Superintendent of Schools
- Kristin Anderson, Executive Director, Office of Communications
- Dr. Jan Barth, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Teaching & Learning
- Susan Beck, Executive Director, Office of Special Education & Student Support
- Michele Blatt, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Support & Accountability
- Charlene Coburn, Senior Administrator, Office of District & School Advancement
- Dr. Kathy D'Antoni, Associate Superintendent, Division of Technical Education & Governor's Economic Initiatives
- Monica DellaMea, Executive Director, Office of Early & Elementary Learning
- Terry Harless, Chief Financial Officer, Office of Finance & Administration
- Matthew Hicks, Assistant Director, Office of District & School Advancement
- Oliver Ho, Coordinator, Office of Data Analysis & Research
- Heather Hutchens, General Counsel, Office of Legal Services
- Derek Lambert, Coordinator, Office of Middle & Secondary Learning
- Dr. Andrea Lemon, Coordinator, Office of Middle & Secondary Learning
- Dr. Vaughn Rhudy, Executive Director, Office of Assessment
- Dr. Carla Warren, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Office of the Superintendent
- Amy Willard, Executive Director, Office of School Finance
- Joey Wiseman, Executive Director, Office of Middle & Secondary Learning

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External Groups

- Nick D'Amico, Cleveland Metro School District
- Naomi Rubin DeVeaux, National Charter School Institute
- Lisa Grover, National Alliance of Public Charter Schools (NAPCS)
- Irene Holtzman, Parents Amplifying Voices in Education (DC PAVE)
- Stephanie Klupinski, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation
- Chloe Pinkerton, New Visions Charter School
- Matt Rado, Cleveland Metro School District
- Emily Schultz, National Alliance of Public Charter Schools (NAPCS)
- Jessica Wedgeworth, University Charter School
- Carol Young, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation
- Todd Ziebarth, National Alliance of Public Charter Schools (NAPCS)
- Veronica Brooks-Uy, National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA)

**TITLE 126
LEGISLATIVE RULE
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SERIES 79
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS (3300)**

§126-79-1. General.

- 1.1. Scope. -
- 1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Constitution, Article XII, §2; W. Va. Code §18-2-5 and §18-5G-1 et seq.
- 1.3. Filing Date. -- .
- 1.4. Effective Date. -- .
- 1.5. Repeal of Former Rule. -- None. This is a new rule.

§126-79-2. Purpose.

2.1. Consistent with language of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1, et. seq., the purpose of this policy is to direct the establishment of charter schools in West Virginia that offer students more educational options than are currently available; that employ innovative methods and programs designed to increase student engagement and achievement; and/or that utilize distinctive school curricula, specialized academic, or technical themes.

2.2. Consistent with the stated intent and objectives in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1, the purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and transparent process that allows for the creation and operation of charter schools described above. To this end, charter schools are afforded significantly greater autonomy than non-charter public schools in exchange for greater expectations and accountability than non-charter public schools.

2.3. The West Virginia Department of Education (“WVDE”) is statutorily charged with making certain materials available to assist charter applicants, authorizers, governing board members, etc. Those materials will be available for use by charter applicants, authorizers, governing board members, and charter school administrators in February 2020 at the WVDE’s website.

§126-79-3. Definitions.

3.1. Accountability Plan. The set of objectives against which the success of a charter school is evaluated. The accountability plan must be comprised of two parts. First, charter schools must participate in the state accountability system, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(1) and §18-5G-8(b)(10). Second, charter schools are accountable to a performance framework defined in the charter contract that includes a set of student outcome goals and specific measures aligned to the educational mission of the charter school, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(a)(4), §18-5G-6(h), and §18-5G-9(c). Authorizers will use success in meeting the goals of the accountability plan in evaluating the status of charter contracts.

3.2. Authorizer. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(2), the entity that reviews charter school applications, determines whether to approve or reject charter school applications, enters into charter contracts with approved charter school applicants, oversees the charter public school the entity has authorized, and determines whether to renew, not renew, or revoke a charter contract.

3.2.a. Authorizers include (1) a county board of education when the application includes a primary recruitment area that is wholly within the county over which the county board has jurisdiction, or (2) two or more county boards of education when the application includes a primary recruitment area that encompasses territory in the two or more counties over which the respective boards have jurisdiction. The West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) may serve as an authorizer in a county where the WVBE is currently intervening pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-2E-5 or when an authorizer has approved an application and then submits a request to the WVBE to perform all other authorizer duties and responsibilities because the authorizer lacks the capacity to fulfill the authorizing duties and responsibilities set forth in law and policy.

3.3. Charter Applicant or Applicant – Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(1), any one or more combination of parents/guardians, community members, teachers, school administrators, or institution of higher education in this state who are interested in organizing a charter school, have obtained or applied to obtain 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, and have developed and submitted a charter school application to an authorizer. Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, an applicant must obtain 501(c)(3) status before operation of any charter school commences.

3.4. Charter Contract. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(3), the fixed-term, renewable contract between a charter school's governing board and an authorizer. The required components of a charter contract are detailed in section 6 of this policy.

3.5. Charter Public School or Charter School. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(11), a public school that is authorized in accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-1, et seq. and this policy. References to the entity of a charter school encompass the governing board, administration, and staff of the charter school in question, except where specific reference is made to one group. In all cases, the governing board of a charter school is ultimately responsible for the actions and performance of the charter school.

3.6. Conditional Approval. Approval given by an authorizer after thoroughly reviewing a charter school application based upon the representations and commitments made by the applicant in the application. Satisfaction of those representations and commitments will result in final approval of the charter school application by the authorizer.

3.7. Conversion Charter School. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(5), a public school that existed as a non-charter public school prior to being authorized to operate as a charter school. Applicants seeking to establish a conversion charter school can only apply to the county board of education where the school is located. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(f), existing private, parochial, and nonpublic schools are not permitted to apply as a conversion charter school.

3.8. Education Service Provider (ESP). An entity that manages the day-to-day delivery of education to students in a charter school and meets and adheres to the requirements set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(7) and section 11 of this policy.

3.11. Governing Board. An entity that meets the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-7 and is party to a charter contract with an authorizer. Specific references to the governing board in this policy indicate where the governing board has a specific duty to perform certain acts. The governing board is the entity responsible for the actions and performance of charter schools.

3.12. Non-charter Public School. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(9), a public school or multicounty career technical education (CTE) center other than a charter school.

3.13. Start-up Charter school. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(13), a charter school that did not exist as a non-charter public school prior to becoming a charter school. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(f), existing private, parochial, and nonpublic schools are not permitted to apply as start-up charter schools.

3.14. Student. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(15), any person who is eligible to attend a public school in West Virginia.

§126-79-4. Charter School Application.

4.1. Charter school applications require applicants to provide information and evidence about a charter applicant's ability to open and operate a charter school that expands educational options and improves student outcomes. Well-designed charter school applications ensure that such evidence is sufficient to enable authorizers to make well-informed decisions regarding the approval status of charter school applications.

4.2. To assist and support both charter applicants and authorizers, the WVDE will develop and maintain a standard charter school application, available on the WVDE's website, to be used in the application process. County boards of education may issue addenda to modify the application so long as, at a minimum, the resulting comprehensive application materials contain the items and acknowledgments outlined in this section. County boards shall either make this application and any addenda available on their websites no later than April 30, 2020, or direct charter applicants to the WVDE website to access the standard application.

4.3. In accord with W. Va. Code §18-5G-3 and §18-5G-8, the following items must be addressed in a charter school application:

4.3.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(1), a mission statement and a vision statement for the charter school, inclusive of any specialized focus to be advanced through the establishment of the charter school.

4.3.b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(2) and §18-5G-8(14), a description of the charter school's proposed educational program, including the grades and ages the charter school seeks to serve. While the charter school may include virtual learning opportunities to its students as part of its proposed program, the proposed program shall not be a full-time virtual program.

4.3.c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(5), an explanation of how proposed program is likely to improve achievement of traditionally underperforming students in the county.

4.3.d. Proposed accountability plan, including but not limited to:

4.3.d.1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(3), student achievement goals for the proposed program and the method to evaluate whether students have attained the skills and knowledge specified for those goals;

4.3.d.2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(4), the charter school's plan for using data derived from student evaluations and assessments to drive instruction and promote continued school improvement;

4.3.d.3. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(4), an acknowledgement that the charter school will participate in the state's accountability system and an explanation for how the charter school will consider the state accountability results in its specific accountability plan; and

4.3.d.4. For charter schools seeking to enroll high school students, the proposed requirements for graduation.

4.3.e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(6), the proposed governance structure, inclusive of at least:

4.3.e.1. List of initial governing board members. For the initial governing board members, the applicant shall identify any education-related lawsuits in which such individuals have been involved, either directly or indirectly. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(a), the initial governing board shall consist of no fewer than five members elected or selected in a manner specified in the charter school application, including at least the following:

4.3.e.1.A. Two parents of students attending the charter school operating under the governing board. These members may be identified after enrollment has occurred; and

4.3.e.1.B. Two members who reside in the community served by the charter school.

4.3.e.2. Bylaws, which shall include description of the qualifications, terms, and methods of appointment or election of governing board members, subject to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(b), which requires members of governing boards:

4.3.e.2.A. Not be an employee of the charter school administered by the governing board;

4.3.e.2.B. Not be an employee of an ESP that provides services to the charter school;

4.3.e.2.C. File a full disclosure report to the authorizer identifying potential conflicts of interest, relationships with management organizations, and relationships with family members who are employed by the public charter school or have other business dealings with the school, the management organization of the school, or any other public charter school;

4.3.e.2.D. Collectively possess expertise in leadership, curriculum and instruction, law, human resources, and finance; and

4.3.e.2.E. Be considered an officer of a school district under the provisions of W. Va. Code §6-6-7 and removal from office shall be in accordance with the provisions of that section.

4.3.e.3. Organizational structure of the charter school, which shall include clear lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, school administrators, staff, any advisory bodies or parent and teacher councils, and any external individuals or organizations that will play a role in managing the charter school, including, but not limited to ESPs.

4.3.f. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(7), the plans and timelines for student application to and enrollment in the charter school, inclusive of the school's primary recruitment area and process for conducting a transparent and random admission lottery when necessary, subject to §18-5G-11 and section 9 of this policy. The primary recruitment area shall be based on the charter school's estimated facility and program capacity, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(5). The applicant shall also identify any student enrollment preferences, in ranked order, it plans to use should student applications exceed capacity. The use of agreed upon preferences in any lottery conducted for admission to the charter school shall conform to the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-11 and section 9 of this policy.

4.3.g. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(8), a proposed five-year budget, including the start-up year and projections for four additional years with clearly stated assumptions.

4.3.h. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(9), the proposed fiscal and internal control policies of the charter school.

4.3.i. A staffing plan that outlines a strategy for hiring the professional and service personnel necessary to reasonably achieve the charter school's education mission who meet the hiring criteria identified in the charter school application. The staffing plan must include, but is not limited to, an explanation of how the governing board plans to establish requisite qualifications and any associated certification and/or licensure necessary for administrators, teachers, and other instructional and support staff to be employed at the charter school and a method for verifying that these requirements are met, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(8). At a minimum, the proposed criteria for hiring qualified teachers and other instructional staff shall demonstrate that individuals have relevant academic or occupational qualifications or experiences that reasonably indicate they will be competent to fill the positions in which they would be employed; and

4.3.j. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(11), a proposed handbook outlining the charter school's personnel policies, which, at a minimum, shall include:

4.3.j.1. A description of staff responsibilities and employment practices; and

4.3.j.2. Any performance management processes and plans for administrators, teachers, other instructional personnel, and other staff at the charter school.

4.3.k. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(12) and consistent with section 9 of this policy, an explanation of proposed student discipline procedures, including any disciplinary procedures specifically designed for students with disabilities, which shall provide for appropriate due process protections for students and be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations governing the placement of students with disabilities.

4.3.l. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(13), a description of the facilities to be used by the charter school and how the facility supports the implementation of the school's program and meets

zoning, building, and safety requirements established for non-charter public schools, pursuant to W. Va. §18-5G-3(c)(12) and §18-5G-3(c)(13).

4.3.m. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(14), the projected minimum and maximum enrollment per grade per year throughout the duration of the contract.

4.3.n. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(15), the school calendar and school day schedule.

4.3.o. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(16), the types and amounts of insurance coverage the charter school will obtain, which shall include adequate insurance for liability, property loss, and the personal injury.

4.3.p. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(17), a description of food services to be provided to students attending the school and how those services shall meet federal nutrition standards, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(1).

4.3.q. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(19), the ethics standards for the school as well as governing board, officers, and school employees.

4.3.r. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(20), the plan for serving students with disabilities, English Learners, bilingual students, students who are academically behind, and students who are gifted. At a minimum, this plan must comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. To the extent known, the application shall identify the specific areas and services where the charter school will seek to contract with the authorizer and/or other service providers.

4.3.s. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(21), a description of co-curricular and extracurricular programs to be offered, how such programs will be funded and delivered. All extracurricular programs offered by the charter school are subject to Secondary Schools Activities Commission (SSAC) rules.

4.3.t. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(22), a clear, articulated proposed process for resolving disputes with authorizer.

4.3.u. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(23), a detailed start-up plan, including financing, tasks, timelines, and individuals responsible for carrying out the plan.

4.3.v. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(24), the charter school's plan to notify students, parents, and others in the school's primary recruitment area of the school as an option available for students and the process for applying for enrollment in the charter school.

4.3.w. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(25), the charter school's plan for parental and community involvement.

4.3.x. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(c), if the charter school intends to contract with an ESP, the information included in section 11 of this policy must be included in the charter school application.

4.3.y. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(11), the process the charter school will use to obtain a criminal history check for charter school personnel and governing board members. Charter applicants may rely on any criminal history check performed by the WVDE in conjunction with the issuance of a

license or other credential to work in the public schools in this state.

4.3.z. Any additional information the authorizer includes as part of the charter school application.

4.3.aa. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(18), the proposed process and procedures to be followed in the case of closure or dissolution of the charter school for any reason. At a minimum, the proposed process shall:

4.3.aa.1. Explain the method for notifying interested students, parents, staff, and stakeholders;

4.3.aa.2. Describe the process for the transfer of students, student records, staff/human resource records, and administrative and financial documents and information to the appropriate county board of education;

4.3.aa.3. Provide assurance and agreement to return net assets or equity to authorizer after payment of debts;

4.3.aa.4. Detail the process for reporting any outstanding data and completing necessary auditing;

4.3.aa.5. Establish a timeline for performing and completing all tasks related to the closure; and

4.3.aa.6. Comply with the provisions of section 8 of this policy.

4.4. The following items must also be addressed in a charter school application seeking to establish a conversion charter school:

4.4.a. The level of support from staff and families of students enrolled in the school for the filing of the application to convert the non-charter public school to a charter school.

4.4.b The charter schools' plans for leasing and using the facilities and equipment of the existing non-charter public school, including but not limited to existing school buildings, information technology (IT) equipment, athletic facilities and equipment, etc., pursuant to §18-5G-12.

4.5. All charter applicants must agree to the following terms and include these terms with affirmative acknowledgements the charter school application:

4.5.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(1), the applicant is a 501(c)(3) organization or has applied for such status.

4.5.b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(1) and §18-5G-3(c)(6), charter schools will administer the same required general summative assessments as non-charter public schools.

4.5.c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(3), the charter school will not be home school or virtual school based.

4.5.d. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(4) and §18-5G-3(a)(5), the charter school is not affiliated with any religious organization and will not espouse any religious preference or promote/engage

in any religious practices in their educational program, admissions, employment policies, or operations.

4.5.e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(7), the charter school will not charge tuition and will only charge fees as may be imposed by non-charter local public schools.

4.5.f. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(8), the charter school will not, whether through the enrollment process or general operation of the school, put in place requirements or practices that would exclude any child from enrollment at the charter school who would not be excluded at a non-charter public school.

4.5.g. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(1), the charter school will comply with all federal requirements, including but not limited to federal nutrition standards, the Civil Rights Act, the McKinney Vento Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

4.5.h. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(2), the charter school will timely comply and respond to requests received pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (W. Va. Code §29B-1-1, et seq.).

4.5.i. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(2), the governing board will conduct its business in compliance with The Open Governmental Meetings Act (W. Va. Code §6-9A-1, et seq.).

4.5.j. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(3), the charter school will adhere to the same immunization requirements that are applicable to non-charter public schools.

4.5.k. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(4), the charter school will adhere to the same compulsory school attendance requirements that are applicable to non-charter public schools.

4.5.l. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(5), students attending the charter school will receive the same minimum number of days or an equivalent amount of instructional time per year as required of students attending non-charter public schools under W. Va. Code §18-5-45.

4.5.m. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(7), the charter school will comply with the West Virginia Student Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act as set forth in W. Va. Code §18-2-5h.

4.5.n. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(11), contractors and service providers, and employees of the same, will be prohibited from making direct contact with students and will not be permitted unaccompanied access to school grounds when students are present until it can be verified that such individuals have not committed an offense that would subject him/her to register as a sex offender.

4.5.o. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(f), no elected official is receiving, or will receive, monetary compensation if the charter school proposed in the charter school application is authorized.

4.5.p. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(8), the charter school will use the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) to report all data required by statute or policy or the charter contract.

4.5.q. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10), the charter school will meet the same accounting

and financial reporting requirements required of non-charter public schools, including but not limited to participation in the State Auditor's financial transparency website.

4.5.r. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(13) and §18-5G-3(c)(13), the charter school will adhere to the same building codes, occupancy requirements, regulations, and facility fees that apply to non-charter public schools under Chapter 18 of the W. Va. Code, including but not limited to West Virginia State Fire Marshal inspections and certificate of occupancy certificate requirements. The charter school shall further acknowledge that it will obtain all required occupation and operation certificates and licenses prior to the first instructional day for students.

4.5.s. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(6), the charter school shall not discriminate against any person on any basis which would be unlawful for non-charter public schools in the school district.

§126-79-5. Charter School Application Process.

5.1. A transparent, clearly defined process for evaluating charter school applications will help build public confidence that approval or denial decisions are fairly rendered based on consistent criteria. Defining such a process will also help applicants submit substantive applications that provide authorizers with the evidence necessary to make decisions that best serve the interests of students.

5.2. Applications forms.

5.2.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(1), the WVDE will develop and maintain standard charter school application forms, based on consultation with nationally recognized charter school organizations and West Virginia education stakeholders and the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1, et seq. These forms shall be available on the WVDE's website.

5.2.b. Authorizers are permitted to issue addenda to modify the standard charter school application form for charter applicants to complete in accordance with section 4 of this policy. Charter applicants should verify with a county board of education that it has not issued an addendum to the standard charter school application that also needs to be completed and timely submitted with the standard charter school application form.

5.2.c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(a)(3), authorizers have the responsibility to solicit high-quality applications for charter schools.

5.2.c.1. To fulfill this duty, authorizers may use on the charter school application and accompanying materials developed by the WVDE and disseminated on the department's website.

5.2.c.2. Authorizers have the option to go beyond the materials developed by the WVDE and release requests for applications (RFAs) or other forms of active solicitation for charter school applications to fulfill the legislative intent outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 to provide options that expand educational opportunities not currently available to students in their jurisdiction. These RFAs may specify additional application requirements, forms, and criteria, but authorizers are still required to use the statewide application as the core of the application. Authorizers may also highlight specific unmet educational needs or demands in their RFAs. Active charter school solicitations may include but are not limited to, the following preferences for schools that:

5.2.c.2.A. Serve students with a specific special need (e.g., students with a specific disability, students not on track to graduate due to insufficient credit accumulation, etc.);

5.2.c.2.B. Serve a geographic area/community where students are poorly served by current educational options;

5.2.c.2.C. Serve students in a specific set of grades or programmatic level;

5.2.c.2.D. Serve students with particular academic or career interests, so long as the school does not exclude students based on prior achievement or performance in the focus area;

5.2.c.2.E. Serve students using a specific pedagogy or educational philosophy not otherwise available to students in the community; and

5.2.c.2.F. Meet educational needs or demands expressed by local students and/or community members.

5.3. Evaluation of Charter School Applications.

5.3.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(a)(2), authorizers are to establish and maintain policies and practices consistent with professional standards for authorizers relating to the evaluation of charter school applications. To fulfill this requirement and so charter applicants are aware of the criteria to be used in evaluating applications, authorizers shall either:

5.3.a.1. Use the evaluation criteria in this policy, which were developed based on consultation with nationally recognized charter school organizations, in accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(a), and education stakeholders; or

5.3.a.2. Adopt a policy outlining evaluation criteria that is consistent with the intent of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 and recognized standards for charter school authorizers no later than May 31, 2020.

5.3.b. As part of its review of a charter school application and prior to rendering a decision on the application, in accord with W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(b), a potential authorizer shall:

5.3.b.1. Thoroughly review the contents of the application;

5.3.b.2. Conduct an in-person interview with the applicant or applicants;

5.3.b.3. Provide an opportunity in a public forum for local residents and stakeholders to provide input and learn about the proposed charter school described in the charter school application;

5.3.b.4. Identify any deficiencies in an application and allow an applicant 30 days after receipt of identified deficiencies to provide additional materials, clarifications, and amendments to its application to address the deficiencies; and

5.4. Evaluation Criteria.

5.4.a. The evaluation criteria included in this policy were developed after consultation with

nationally recognized charter organizations and education stakeholders. The model materials published by such organizations form the basis of the evaluation criteria in this policy, are rooted in best practices, and aim to ensure charter schools meet the intent and requirements outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. The criteria below are summarized at a high level. As required by W. Va. Code §18-5G-4, the WVDE will provide guidance and forms on how to evaluate each factor in its required training for potential authorizers.

5.4.b. Authorizers relying on this policy to evaluate charter school applications shall consider the following criteria:

5.4.b.1. Educational Design Program and Capacity.

5.4.b.1.A. Education Program

5.4.b.1.A.1. Program overview. A concise summary of the education program offered by the charter school and how it will achieve the charter school's educational mission.

5.4.b.1.A.2. Curriculum and instructional design. An outline of the curricula and instructional philosophy and strategies that the charter public school plans to implement, including justification for their selection in relation to student population, educational mission, and mastery of the West Virginia College- and Career-Readiness Standards.

5.4.b.1.A.3. Pupil performance standards. An overview of the learning standards for students at the charter school and detailed explanation for how deviation from the West Virginia College- and Career-Readiness Standards exceed the rigor of those standards.

5.4.b.1.A.4. High school graduation requirements and postsecondary readiness (high schools only). A clear definition of the requirements to graduate from the charter school and how those requirements prepare a student for college, career, or other postsecondary opportunities.

5.4.b.1.A.5. School calendar and schedule. A description of the school calendar and how the charter school will meet minimum instructional time requirements, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(5).

5.4.b.1.A.6. School culture. An explanation of the routines that the charter school will employ to establish the envisioned school culture and create an environment that promotes academic, social, and emotional flourishing.

5.4.b.1.A.7. Supplemental programming. A thoughtful proposal for providing extracurricular and co-curricular programming, enrichment activities, and student supports, including but not limited to, interscholastic athletics, student-led clubs, summer school, and afterschool, if the charter school elects to offer such programming.

5.4.b.1.A.8. Special populations and at-risk students. A comprehensive plan for serving students with special needs, including but not limited to students with disabilities, English learners, students at-risk for dropout, and students identified as gifted, and for meeting related federal and state law, regulations, rules, and policies.

5.4.b.1.A.9. Student recruitment and enrollment. A context-specific outreach strategy that ensures the charter school expands educational options for students in the primary recruitment area and is aligned with the status of the school as a start-up or conversion charter school.

5.4.b.1.A.10. Student discipline. A thorough discipline policy that promotes strong school culture, outlines disciplinary procedures and consequences, and protects the rights of students.

5.4.b.1.A.11. Parent and community involvement. A thoughtful set of strategies for engaging with parents and the community, including local elected officials, community leaders, and business partners, around the development, opening, and operation of the charter school.

5.4.b.1.A.12. Educational program capacity. A well-crafted plan for recruiting and retaining a school leader as well as other key instructional staff, support staff, and operational managers.

5.4.b.1.A.13. Conversion planning. A proposal for executing a successful conversion that offers students enrolled at the existing non-charter public school expanded educational options and supports improved outcomes for students.

5.4.b.1.B. Operations Plan and Capacity.

5.4.b.1.B.1. Governance.

5.4.b.1.B.1.(a). Legal Status and Governing Documents. A proposed legal status and structure that complies with state law and policy in accordance with §18-5G-7.

5.4.b.1.B.1.(b). Governing Board. A detailed plan for ensuring that board members meet the ethics and expertise requirements established in §18-5G-1 et seq. and this policy.

5.4.b.1.B.1.(c). Dispute Resolution Process. A clearly defined process for dispute resolution that is fair to parents, students, and staff.

5.4.b.1.B.2. Human Capital.

5.4.b.1.B.2.(a). School Staff Structure. A proposal for organizing school staff that establishes clear roles, responsibilities, and relationships among school administrators and staff.

5.4.b.1.B.2.(b). Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation. A comprehensive strategy for recruiting, developing, and retaining the high-quality staff necessary to achieve the educational mission of the charter school.

5.4.b.1.B.2.(c). Professional Learning. A thoughtful approach for the induction and professional learning of school leaders, teachers, and staff to support strong and improving instruction.

5.4.b.1.B.3. Performance Management. An overview of mission-aligned, individually-tailored performance management system that holds the charter school, its governing board, and all staff accountable and provides for continuous improvement.

5.4.b.1.B.4. Facilities.

5.4.b.1.B.4.(a). Public Facilities. A description of the facilities needed to achieve the charter school's educational mission and how available public facilities meet those needs.

5.4.b.1.B.4.(b). Independent Facilities. A description of the facilities needed to achieve the charter school's educational mission and how the charter school will obtain independent facilities that meet requirements.

5.4.b.1.B.5. Start-up and Ongoing Operations. A sound, detailed plan for executing start-up of the charter school and maintaining smooth school operations, including, but not limited to, areas such as school and student safety, transportation (if applicable), and insurance coverage.

5.4.b.1.B.6. Operations Capacity. A description of individual and team qualifications for executing a comprehensive operations plan that includes, but is not limited to, topics such as staffing, performance management, facilities management, professional learning, start-up plans, and general operations.

5.4.b.1.B.6.(a). ESP (if applicable). A detailed explanation of how any proposed ESPs meet the requirements of section 11 of this policy.

5.4.b.1.C. Financial Plan and Capacity.

5.4.b.1.C.1. Financial Plan. A detailed proposal for start-up and multi-year operating budgets necessary to achieve the educational mission of the charter school as well as the standard operating procedures, roles and responsibilities, and contingency plans to realize sound financial management across the term of the contract.

5.4.b.1.C.2. Financial Capacity. A clear demonstration of the capacity of the governing board and school administration to execute the financial plan.

5.4.c. In evaluating charter school applications, authorizers shall consider the following criteria based on the intent outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1:

5.4.c.1. Overall Purpose and Mission of School. A clear, thorough explanation for how the educational mission and plan of the charter school will promote unique, innovative, and/or flexible educational options not available in the non-charter public schools that are accessible to students in the primary recruitment area, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b) by:

5.4.c.1.A. Creating more public-school options with high standards for student performance, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(1);

5.4.c.1.B. Allowing innovative educational methods, practices, and programs that result in higher student achievement, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(2);

5.4.c.1.C. Establishing a distinctive theme, curriculum, or mode of instruction, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(3) and §18-5G-1(b)(4)(C);

5.4.c.1.D. Providing parents with options to best serve the interests or needs of their children,

pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(4);

5.4.c.1.E. Providing for greater student, parent, and community involvement, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(5);

5.4.c.1.F. Utilizing exceptional levels of self-direction and flexibility to meet the robust levels of accountability expectations, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(6);

5.4.c.1.G. Encouraging the replication of research-based successful strategies for improving student learning pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(7); and/or

5.4.c.1.H. Offering targeted strategies that specifically focus on students with special needs, including, but not limited to, at-risk students, English learners, students with severe disciplinary problems, students involved with the juvenile justice system, or students with disabilities pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(4)(B).

5.4.c.2. Identified need.

5.4.c.2.A. A rationale for establishing the charter school that aims to better serve groups of students – characterized by geography, socio-economic state, other demographic attributes, special needs, etc. – in the local school district(s) who have been historically underserved.

5.4.c.2.B. A clear explanation of how the educational mission and plan of the school will address the needs of these students, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(5).

5.4.c.3. Demonstrated Demand. An analysis of the sustainability of the charter school based on the current and future size of the student population that the charter school aims to serve and the demand among this population for additional educational options beyond existing non-charter public schools. This analysis must provide reasonable evidence of sustainability, as in any business plan, and may, but is not required to, include:

5.4.c.3.A. Evidence of sufficient demand among parents and students in the local school district, primary recruitment area, and/or target underserved student population, including student and parent surveys; and

5.4.c.3.B. Projections of changes in demand based on factors such as population and demographic changes, local economic outlook, enrollment changes in surrounding schools, etc. that provide sufficient enrollment for the charter school to operate.

5.4.c.4. Additional criteria for conversion charter schools.

5.4.c.4.A. A survey of the interest of students, staff, and families in converting the school from a non-charter public school to a charter school; and

5.4.c.4.B. The capacity of the conversion charter school and authorizer to develop a plan and timeline for determining which students and staff will remain at the conversion charter school. The authorizer and charter school must consider how students who do not remain at the conversion charter school, for reasons including but not limited to lack of transportation, etc., will enroll in other schools. The

authorizer and charter school must also consider how staff who do not remain at the conversion charter school are to be reassigned in a manner that meets personnel law, policy, and deadlines.

5.5. Initial Application Timeline

5.5.a. Training for Potential Applicants and Authorizers. Timeframe: February-May 2020. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(2), the WVDE will, under direction of the WVBE, organize and provide training opportunities for potential charter school applicants, administrators, and governing board members as well as potential authorizers.

5.5.b. Release of Active Solicitation by Potential Authorizers. Deadline: May 31, 2020. Potential authorizers must release any RFAs, other active application solicitations, and additional application requirements or forms, no later than May 31, 2020, to allow potential applicants sufficient time to address such requirements.

5.5.c. Submission of Charter School Application. Deadline: August 31, 2020. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(1), charter applicants must complete applications and submit materials to potential authorizer(s) no later than August 31, 2020.

5.5.d. Conditional Approval or Denial Decision by Authorizer. Deadline: November 30, 2020. Any potential authorizer receiving a charter school application shall issue a decision no later than November 30, 2020, conditionally approving or denying all applications received.

5.5.d.1. Decisions on status of charter school applications shall be based on objective criteria, as set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(b)(6) and subsection 5.4 of this policy.

5.5.d.2. The decision shall be rendered in an open meeting and shall include a detailed explanation stating the reasons for the approval or denial.

5.5.d.3. The decision on a charter school application shall be reduced to writing, inclusive of a detailed explanation for the decision. The written decision, as well as the charter school applications conditionally approved by virtue of lack of action by a county board of education, shall promptly be provided to the charter applicant and the WVDE.

5.5.d.4. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(d), failure of a potential authorizer to render a decision on a charter school application by the November 30, 2020, deadline is statutorily deemed a conditional approval of the application.

5.5.d.5. Upon satisfaction of any incomplete items in a conditionally approved charter school application or resulting charter contract, an authorizer shall issue final approval of the charter school application. It is the responsibility of the applicant and/or governing board to promptly notify the authorizer once all such items are complete.

5.5.e. Execution of Charter Contract. Deadline: March 31, 2021. Authorizers and charter applicants receiving conditional approval, subject to any additional review required, are to work diligently to negotiate, agree, and execute a charter contract satisfying the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section 6 of this policy no later than March 31, 2021. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-9(a), the governing board and the authorizer shall negotiate and enter into a charter contract within 90 days of charter school

application approval. However, an additional month has been added to this final deadline in case of approval of applications that would cause the number of charter schools to exceed the statutory limit (three until July 1, 2023 and three additional on that date and every three years thereafter). If the parties fail to execute a charter contract by April 30, 2021, the charter school may not open for the 2021-2022 school year. The parties may continue to negotiate the contract for the charter school to open in the 2022-2023 school year.

5.6. Timeline After Initial Application Cycle.

5.6.a. After the first cycle of charter school applications outlined in subsection 5.5 above, the charter school application process will begin earlier to provide additional time for charter schools to prepare to begin operations.

5.6.b. Training for Potential Applicants and Authorizers. Timeframe: July-January. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(2), the WVDE will, under direction of the WVBE, organize and provide training opportunities for potential charter school applicants, administrators, and governing board members as well as potential authorizers.

5.6.c. Release of Active Solicitation by Potential Authorizers. Deadline: January 1. Potential authorizers must release any requests for applications (RFAs), other active application solicitations, and additional application requirements or forms no later than January 1 in the calendar year prior to opening (e.g., January 1, 2021, for schools seeking to open in the 2022-23 school year). Any changes to application evaluation criteria must be adopted by January 1 as well.

5.6.d. Submission of Charter School Application. Deadline: March 31. Charter applicants must complete applications and submit material to potential authorizer(s) no later than March 31 in the calendar year prior to opening.

5.6.e. Conditional Approval or Denial Decision by Authorizer. Deadline: June 30. Any potential authorizer receiving a charter school application shall issue a decision no later than June 30 in the year prior to opening conditionally approving or denying all applications received.

5.6.e.1. Decisions on charter school applications shall be based on objective criteria, as set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(b)(6) and subsection 5.4 of this policy.

5.6.e.2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(d), failure of a potential authorizer to render a decision on a charter school application by the June 30 deadline is statutorily deemed a conditional approval of the application.

5.6.e.3. The decision shall be rendered in an open meeting and shall include a detailed explanation stating the reasons for the approval or denial.

5.6.e.4. The decision on a charter school application shall be reduced to writing, inclusive of a detailed explanation for the decision. The written decision, as well as charter school applications conditionally approved by virtue of lack of action by a county board of education, shall promptly be provided to the charter applicant and the WVDE.

5.6.e.5. Upon satisfaction of any incomplete items (e.g., obtaining 501(c)3 status) in a

conditionally approved charter school application or resulting charter contract, an authorizer shall issue final approval of the charter school application. It is the responsibility of the applicant and/or governing board to promptly notify the authorizer once all such items are complete.

5.6.f. Execution of Charter Contract. Deadline: October 31. Authorizers and charter applicants receiving conditional approval, subject to any additional review required, are to work diligently to negotiate, agree, and execute a charter contract satisfying the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section 6 of this policy no later than October 31 in the year prior to opening. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-9(a), the governing board and the authorizer shall negotiate and enter into a charter contract within 90 days of charter school application approval. An additional month has been added to this final deadline in case of approval of applications that would cause the number of charter schools to exceed the statutory limit (three until July 1, 2023, and three additional on that date and every three years thereafter). Prior to the start date for students for any charter school in this state, a charter contract must be executed by authorizer and the charter school's governing board.

5.7. Authorized Schools in Excess of Statutory Limit.

5.7.a. If the number of conditionally approved charter schools statewide exceeds statutory limit (three until July 1, 2023, and three additional on that date and every three years thereafter), the WVDE will assemble a neutral, impartial panel to review each of the conditionally approved applications and rank the applications based on the merits of the program proposed and the student population to be served. For the initial cycle, the ranking will be made available to approved charter applicants and authorizers no later than December 31, 2020. The first three charter school applications listed in such rankings may begin the contract negotiation process as outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section 6 of this policy. Conditionally approved charter school applications in excess of the statutory limit that are not selected by the panel must be resubmitted in future years for consideration.

5.7.b. For subsequent annual applications cycles, the ranking will be made available no later than July 31. In subsequent cycles, the number of conditionally approved charter school applications that can begin contract negotiations is not necessarily three (3). Instead, it depends on how many charter schools may be opened without exceeding the statutory limit. Starting from the top of the rankings, a conditionally approved charter school application may proceed to contract negotiations so long as that charter school application would not cause the total number of charter schools in the state to exceed the statutory limit. Charter school applications meeting these criteria may begin the contract negotiation process as outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section 5 of this policy. Conditionally approved charter school applications in excess of the statutory limit that are not selected by the panel must be resubmitted in future years for consideration.

§126-79-6. Charter Contract.

6.1. Purpose.

6.1.a. The charter contract outlines the expectations of both the charter school and the authorizer. It delineates the working relationship between the charter school and its authorizer.

6.1.a.1. A charter contract should provide clear boundaries around the authority and influence that an authorizer has over the day-to-day operations of a charter school. By doing so, it affords the charter school the autonomy necessary to offer students new and diverse educational options.

6.1.a.2. At the same time, a charter contract must define the expectations that a charter school must meet to continue operating. These expectations include the areas over which the charter school does not have autonomy (e.g., providing legally required services to students with disabilities). Contracts should define the immediate consequences for failing to meet these expectations. The contract should also define expectations for student outcomes that define a charter school's long-term success and help the authorizer determine whether the charter contract warrants renewal.

6.2. In accord with W. Va. Code §18-5G-9, the charter contract must be negotiated, agreed to, and executed by the authorizer and the charter applicant prior to the commencement of any charter school operations. At a minimum, the following items must be addressed in the charter contract. A template charter contract will be available on the WVDE's website. The template contract may be modified as deemed appropriate by the parties to a charter contract, so long as the required items below are addressed.

6.2.a. The term of the initial contract which shall be no longer than five years.

6.2.b. The agreements relating to each specific item required in the charter school application identified in section 4 of this policy.

6.2.c. The acknowledgments included in the charter school application identified in section 4 of this policy.

6.2.d. A shared understanding of the charter school's plans for contracting with ESPs and descriptions of the specific services that any ESPs will provide.

6.2.e. The rights and duties of the parties to the charter contract, which shall not contradict section 7 of this policy.

6.2.f. The administrative relationship between the authorizer and the charter school.

6.2.g. The process the authorizer will use to provide ongoing oversight, consistent with professional standards.

6.2.h. The specific commitments of the authorizer relating to its obligations to oversee, monitor the progress of, and supervise the charter school. The contract should specifically identify the evaluation tools and oversight activities the authorizer will use to measure student outcomes and ensure compliance with applicable statutes and terms of the charter contract.

6.2.i. The process and criteria the authorizer will use to annually monitor and evaluate the overall academic, operating, and fiscal conditions of the charter school, including the process and timeline the authorizer will use to oversee the correction of any deficiencies found.

6.2.j. The recourse available should either of the parties fail to adhere to their contractual duties or responsibilities outlined in this policy or state code.

6.2.k. The process the authorizer, governing board, and charter school will follow in the event of closure of the charter school, subject to section 8 of this policy.

6.2.l. The process for any revisions or amendments to the terms of the charter contract agreed to by the authorizer and the governing board.

6.2.m. The process agreed to by the authorizer and the governing board, that identifies how disputes between the authorizer and the governing board will be handled.

6.2.n. The indicators, measures, and metrics, the authorizer will use to measure the performance of the charter school. The contractual performance measures may build upon those outlined in the charter school application and must include, at a minimum, the following:

6.2.n.1. The indicators included in state accountability for all public schools in West Virginia, including disaggregated indicators for student subgroups;

6.2.n.2. Student proficiency or overall achievement, if not included in state accountability;

6.2.n.3. Student growth or progress, if not included in state accountability;

6.2.n.4. The achievement gaps in both student proficiency or achievement and student growth between student subgroups, including race, sex, socioeconomic status, and areas of exceptionality, if not included in state accountability;

6.2.n.5. Student attendance, if not included in state accountability;

6.2.n.6. Student suspensions, if not included in state accountability;

6.2.n.7. Student withdrawals;

6.2.n.8. Student retention/turnover within a year and from year to year;

6.2.n.9. Governing board's performance and stewardship, including compliance with all applicable statutes and terms of charter contract; and

6.2.n.10. Demographic makeup in comparison to the demographics of the community the charter school aims to serve as defined by non-charter public schools overlapping the primary recruitment area of the charter school, non-charter public schools under the jurisdiction of the authorizing county board(s) of education, and/or another reasonable and agreed upon definition.

6.2.o. The authorizer and governing board may also agree to include any other additional valid and reliable indicators as necessary or desired.

6.2.p. Any other terms and conditions agreed upon by the authorizer and the governing board, including preopening conditions for the charter school.

6.3. Amendments to a duly executed charter contract must be in writing and agreed upon by all parties to the charter contract.

§126-79-7. Responsibilities of Parties to a Charter Contract.

7.1. Authorizer Responsibilities.

7.1.a. Authorizers are responsible for ensuring the conditions necessary for charter schools to offer diverse educational options not available in non-charter public schools and to help improve student outcomes in the community served. To fulfill its duty, an authorizer shall carry out its duties and responsibilities with an aim to achieve the following goals and objectives:

7.1.a.1. Tailor charter school flexibility outlined in state code (§18-5G) appropriately to the educational mission of the charter school and needs of the students and community it aims to serve;

7.1.a.2. Provide adequate accountability to require that charter schools it oversees are making reasonable progress towards achieving their educational mission;

7.1.a.3. Conduct necessary oversight to ensure students in charter schools it oversees receive legally required services in a safe and healthy learning environment, including, but not limited to, oversight of special education services, school nutrition, ADA compliance, etc.

7.1.a.4. Consider how charter schools enrich and otherwise impact the educational opportunities in its jurisdiction in present and future years.

7.1.b. In addition to any duties and responsibilities outlined in the charter contract, an authorizer is responsible, in part pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6, for adhering to the following duties and responsibilities. Unless specifically addressed in state law, this policy, or the charter contract, the authorizer is responsible for determining the appropriate method for carrying out its duties and responsibilities.

7.1.b.1. Demonstration of public accountability and transparency. Authorizers must earn and maintain public trust around the operation of charter schools. Therefore, authorizers shall conduct meetings and business in an open and transparent manner consistent with the rules for conducting other business of county boards of education in West Virginia (or the WVBE in the case that the WVBE is acting as the authorizer).

7.1.b.2. Establishment of Authorizing Policies and Practices. Each authorizer shall affirmatively establish the written, nationally-benchmarked oversight policies and practices it will follow in its role. Policies and practices adopted by authorizers shall not contradict federal or state law or this policy. Authorizers that do not adopt a local policy relating to charter schools shall follow this policy. Authorizers may rely on processes (including deadlines) and systems (including electronic forms or other tools) established by the WVDE for the implementation of charter schools unless required by W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. or this policy to establish and publicize specific practices, processes, or systems.

7.1.b.3. Solicitation of High-Quality Charter School Applications. Authorizers have the responsibility to solicit high-quality charter school applications as outlined in section 5.

7.1.b.4. Approval of satisfactory Charter School Applications. Authorizers shall evaluate applications in accordance with the state law and this policy to create charter schools likely to improve student outcomes in West Virginia by expanding the educational options available to students. To promote transparency, in deciding on charter school applications, authorizers shall use the evaluation

criteria set forth in this policy or the evaluation criteria set forth in a properly adopted county board policy.

7.1.b.5. Denial of Unsatisfactory Charter School Applications. Authorizers shall deny applications for charter schools that do not meet specified criteria as outlined above. To promote transparency, in deciding on charter school applications, authorizers shall use the evaluation criteria set forth in this policy or the evaluation criteria set forth in a properly adopted county board policy.

7.1.b.6. Negotiation of Charter School Contracts. Authorizers shall negotiate and execute charter contracts with approved applications in good faith. In such negotiations, authorizers shall adhere to the requirements of §18-5G-9 and section 6 of this policy. In doing so, they shall aim to provide the charter school with the conditions necessary to succeed while safeguarding students under its jurisdiction.

7.1.b.7. Monitoring of Charter School Performance and Compliance. Authorizers shall ensure that charter schools comply with the terms of the charter contract and applicable federal law, state code, and WVBE policies. In performing its monitoring duties, the authorizer shall not unnecessarily inhibit the instructional and educational flexibility provided to charter schools by W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. and this policy.

7.1.b.7.A. In executing monitoring duties, the authorizer will focus on whether the charter school is delivering on the spirit and intent of the educational plan and other components defined in the charter contract. Authorizers are not expected to undertake the same monitoring and compliance support they provide to non-charter public schools. Instead, authorizers are expected to safeguard students through more limited monitoring that may occur less frequently and rely more heavily on data reporting and review, though relying solely on annual reporting to ensure compliance with legal requirements will likely be insufficient.

7.1.b.7.B. When authorizers learn of instances where a charter school is not complying with the terms of the charter contract or applicable federal law, state code, and/or this policy, authorizers shall notify the governing board of the identified issues and “provide reasonable opportunity” for remediation as set forth in the charter contract. To avoid unduly inhibiting charter school autonomy, authorizers shall not require charter schools to take specific remediation as the result of performance monitoring, unless outlined otherwise in the charter contract. However, authorizers may require charter schools to develop and execute a corrective action plan (CAP), pursuant to §18-5G-6(g).

7.1.b.7.C. The above notwithstanding, if a charter school fails to comply with legal requirements or fails to adhere to the CAP, the authorizer may intervene directly and prescribe specific action and/or require representatives of the charter school and its governing board to appear before the WVBE.

7.1.b.7.D. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(b), authorizers are responsible for continually monitoring adherence to the charter school’s Accountability Plan. Authorizers must ensure that standards and goals included in the Accountability Plan are met by each charter school along with other performance measures agreed upon in the charter contract. If monitoring activities reveal performance deficiencies, the authorizer may require charter schools to develop and execute a corrective action plan (CAP). If a charter school does not execute the agreed upon CAP or the CAP provides insufficient to address the deficiencies, the authorizer may require representatives of the charter school and its governing board to appear before the WVBE.

7.1.b.7.E. If an authorizer fails to take appropriate action in response to a charter school that does not meet the standards, including but not limited to issuing corrective action plans, denying a renewal application, and/or suspending or revoking a charter contract, the authorizer shall appear before the WVBE to justify its decision. The WVBE may uphold or overturn the authorizer's decision and may revoke the authority of the authorizer to authorize charter schools. When the WVBE revokes the authorizing authority of a county board, the state board shall serve as the authorizer for all charter schools previously authorized by that county board.

7.1.b.8. Determination of Charter Renewal or Revocation. As set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. and section 8 of this policy, authorizers shall perform a comprehensive review of charter school performance against the expectations set out in the charter contract to determine whether to renew the contract, or whether the current situation is such that immediate suspension or revocation of the charter contract is warranted.

7.1.b.9. Authorizers are the primary liaison between the WVDE and charter schools they authorize. While governing boards are ultimately responsible for complying with state reporting requirements, the authorizer shall facilitate reporting and other communication upon the request of the charter school. In this spirit, authorizers shall provide support to start-up charter schools in using WVEIS and other state or countywide reporting systems that the charter schools are required to use (e.g., online individualized education plan) upon request of the charter school. The authorizer shall also regularly update the WVDE with contact information for the governing board and key administrators of charter schools it authorizes.

7.1.b.10. Upon request of the charter school, authorizers shall provide additional support and oversight to help charter schools comply with state and federal laws in the first year of operation. Such help does not need to be explicitly negotiated as part of the charter contract. Authorizers are not required to complete compliance activities or reporting for charter schools. Help from its authorizer(s) notwithstanding, the charter school has an affirmative duty to become familiar with its duties and responsibilities under state and federal law.

7.1.b.11. Authorizers serve as the local education agency (LEA) for charter schools. As such, they shall receive federal and state funding on behalf of authorized charter schools. Authorizers are responsible for distributing funds as specified by W. Va. Code §18-5G-5 and section 12 of this policy.

7.1.b.12. Authorizers shall timely adhere to all reporting requirements outlined in federal law, state code, or this policy.

7.1.b.13. Upon request of the governing board, an authorizer shall allow facilities within its control, in whole or in part, to be used by the charter school either under long-term occupancy lease agreements or rental agreements for individual events, subject to the following:

7.1.b.13.A. The facility being requested for use is safe and habitable for the purpose in which the charter school seeks to use the facility.

7.1.b.13.B. The facility is not being used by the authorizer for any non-charter public school at the time the charter school seeks to use or lease the facility, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-12(a).

7.1.b.13.C. If a charter school seeks to lease the whole or part of a public facility, the cost of

the lease must be at or under the current market value, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-12(a).

7.1.b.13.D. If a charter school seeks to rent the whole or part of a public facility for an individual event, including, but not limited to, athletic events, theater performances, etc., the cost of the rental must be at or below the cost to the authorizer of making the facility available to the charter school.

7.1.b.14. An authorizer shall not harass, threaten, discipline, discharge, retaliate, or in any manner discriminate against any of its employees involved directly or indirectly with an application to establish a charter school.

7.2. Governing Board/Charter School Responsibilities.

7.2.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-5, the governing board is ultimately accountable and responsible for the actions of the charter school and its ability to deliver the educational options and outcomes outlined in the charter contract.

7.2.b. In addition to any duties and responsibilities outlined in the charter contract, a charter school and its governing board are responsible for adhering to the following duties and responsibilities:

7.2.b.1. Ensuring all instructional personnel employed at the charter school hold a valid and appropriate certification, as specified in the charter school application and contract.

7.2.b.2. Providing the WVDE adequate information to certify such individuals pursuant to the charter certification provided for in W. Va. 126CSR136, WVBE Policy 5202, Minimum Requirements for the Licensure of Professional/Paraprofessional Personnel and Advanced Salary Classifications, and the criteria agreed upon in the charter school application and/or contract as outlined in section 4.3.i.

7.2.b.3. The charter school is responsible for documenting its students' progress towards achieving the defined graduation requirements and certifying completion of requirements for the purpose of reporting graduation outcomes to the authorizer and the WVDE. Charter schools will have the ability to use the same electronic course scheduling and transcript platforms provided by the WVDE as non-charter schools.

7.2.b.4. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c), the governing board shall operate the charter school in accordance with the charter contract and under the oversight of the authorizer. To execute the educational mission and operational plans of the charter contract, the governing board holds powers as a public corporate body including, but not limited to those outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(2):

7.2.b.4.A. Receive and disburse funds for school purposes;

7.2.b.4.B. Secure appropriate insurance and enter into contracts and leases;

7.2.b.4.C. Contract with an ESP, so long as the governing board retains final oversight and authority over the school;

7.2.b.4.D. Pledge, assign, or encumber its assets to be used as collateral for loans or extensions of credit.

7.2.b.4.E. Solicit and accept any gifts or grants for school purposes, subject to applicable laws and the terms of its charter.

7.2.b.4.F. Apply for federal funds that may be available for the implementation of charter school programs; and

7.2.b.4.G. Acquire real property for use as its facilities or facilities from public or private sources.

7.2.b.5. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(3), the governing board shall enroll students in the charter school pursuant to §18-5G-11 and section 9 of this policy.

7.2.b.6. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(4), the governing board shall require any ESP the governing board is contracting with to timely provide a monthly detailed budget to the governing board.

7.2.b.7. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(6)(ix), require any ESP the governing board is contracting with to provide an annual review of educational and operational practices that the ESP found particularly effective for delivering improved student outcomes. The governing board shall report these practices to its authorizer and the state as part of annual reporting on successful innovations as required by state code.

7.2.b.8. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(5), the governing board is required to comply with all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations, including W. Va. 126CSR136, WVBE Policy 2419, Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities. Specifically, the governing board is responsible for ensuring students with disabilities receive the appropriate services in accordance with the students' individualized education programs. The responsibilities of the governing board and the charter school include, but are not limited to:

7.2.b.8.A. Completing annual and triennial individualized education programs.

7.2.b.8.B. Completing eligibility committee meetings.

7.2.b.8.C. Ensure the delivery of required services, either by direct provision or by contracting with another provider (including the county board) to provide required services to students.

7.2.b.9. The governing boards must timely provide information and data upon request by authorizers or the WVDE so that those entities may fulfill federal and statutory reporting requirements. Such requests must give charter schools at least 14 days to fulfill such requests.

7.2.b.10. The governing boards must timely respond and take appropriate action to correct any deficiencies identified by the authorizer.

7.2.b.11. The governing boards must remit to the authorizer an oversight fee in accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(i) and section 12 of this policy.

7.2.c. The charter school is responsible for facilities it uses during periods it is the primary user.

7.2.c.1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-12(c), if the charter school enters into a lease of public

facilities, in part or in whole, the charter school is solely responsible for the direct expenses related to the public facility lease, including utilities, insurance, maintenance, repairs, and remodeling. The county board is responsible for any debt incurred or liens that are attached to the school building before the charter school leases the public facility.

7.2.c.2. If the charter school uses public facilities for individual events, the rental agreement shall define the responsibilities of each party and the costs to be reimbursed by the charter school.

7.2.d. Governing boards and charter schools shall not harass, threaten, discipline, discharge, retaliate, or in any manner discriminate against any of its employees for participation or affiliation in a union or teacher organization.

§126-79-8. Process for Renewal and Revocation of Charter Contracts.

8.1. Purpose. The renewal process is pivotal to ensuring that authorized charter schools continue to promote the aims of improved student outcomes, innovative educational methods, and expanded educational opportunities set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b). The renewal process provides the charter school authorizer with the opportunity to review the practices and outcomes of a charter school and determine whether its continued operation supports these aims in the area within which it operates.

8.2. Renewal Review and Application Process.

8.2.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(a), no later than June 30 preceding the final school year of a charter school's final year of its charter contract, the authorizer shall issue a performance report on the charter school. The performance report shall summarize the charter school's performance record to date, based on agreed data collection in the charter contract state law, and this policy, and shall provide notice of any weaknesses or concerns perceived by the authorizer concerning the school that may jeopardize its position in seeking renewal if not timely rectified. The school and the authorizer shall mutually agree to a reasonable time period for the charter school to respond to the performance report and submit any corrections for the report.

8.2.b. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(b), no later than June 30 preceding the final school year of a charter school's final year of its charter contract, the authorizer shall provide contract renewal application guidance to the charter school. The renewal application guidance shall include or refer explicitly to the criteria and standards agreed upon in the charter contract and will guide the authorizer's renewal decisions. To assist authorizers, the WVDE will provide a standard renewal application template. Authorizers may use and/or modify the standard renewal application to the extent necessary to align the renewal process with the original contract and the educational mission of the charter school. The renewal application guidance that authorizers provide shall, at a minimum, require and provide an opportunity for charter school to:

8.2.b.1. Present evidence, beyond the data contained in the performance report, supporting its case for charter renewal;

8.2.b.2. Describe improvements undertaken or planned for the school and

8.2.b.3. Detail the school's plans for the next charter term.

8.2.c. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(c), no later than September 30 of a charter school's final authorized year of operation under a term of a charter contract, the governing board of the charter school seeking renewal shall submit a renewal application to the authorizer pursuant to the renewal application guidance offered by the authorizer.

8.2.d. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(c), no later than 45 days after receiving a properly completed renewal application, an authorizer shall adopt a resolution in a public meeting regarding the renewal application. In reaching a decision on the renewal application, the authorizer shall:

8.2.d.1. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(c)(1), ground its decisions on a thorough analysis of evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with the terms and measures established in the accountability plan set forth in the charter contract;

8.2.d.2. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(c)(2), ensure that data used in making renewal decisions are available to the charter school and the public;

8.2.d.3. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(c)(3), include, as part of the resolution, a report summarizing the evidence basis and specific reasons for its decision; and

8.2.d.4. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(c)(4), specifically, include one of the following rulings:

8.2.d.4.A. Renew the charter contract for a specified term of years based on the school's performance data and demonstrated capacities of the charter school; or

8.2.d.4.B. Decline to renew the charter contract. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(f), the authorizer may rely on any of the following reasons for not renewing a charter contract:

8.2.d.4.B.1. The health and safety of students attending the charter school is threatened;

8.2.d.4.B.2. The governing board and/or charter school failed to comply with the provisions of this policy, state code, or federal law;

8.2.d.4.B.3. The governing board and/or charter school committed a material violation of any of the terms, conditions, standards, or procedures required in the charter contract;

8.2.d.4.B.4. The charter school failed to meet the performance expectations set forth in the charter contract;

8.2.d.4.B.5. The governing board and/or charter school failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;

8.2.d.4.B.6. The governing board and/or charter school violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not exempted; or

8.2.d.4.B.7. With supporting evidence and rationale, continued operation of the charter school would not be in the best interests of students.

8.2.e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(4)(B), in the case of nonrenewal of a charter contract,

the governing board of the charter school shall have 30 days to respond in writing to the authorizer's decision. The authorizer shall arrange for a public hearing, which shall be recorded, if timely requested by the governing board.

8.2.f. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(4)(B), no later than 40 days after rendering its initial decision on the renewal application, the authorizer shall render a final decision on the renewal application. The authorizer shall consider the governing board's response, testimony, and documentation, as well as the recorded public hearing, prior to rendering a final decision on the renewal application. Pursuant to §18-5G-10(g), the authorizer's final decision, and the reasons supporting the final decision, must be clearly stated in a resolution adopted in a public meeting.

8.2.g. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(e), within 10 days of taking final action on a renewal application, the authorizer shall report the action taken and reasons for the decision to the school's governing board and the state board or affected county board, as applicable. A copy of the report shall be submitted at the same time to the State Superintendent of Schools.

8.2.h. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(d), the failure of the authorizer to act on a renewal application within the designated timeframes shall be deemed an approval of the renewal application.

8.3. Revocation of a Charter Contract.

8.3.a. Revocation Process. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(f), A charter contract may be revoked at any time if the authorizer determines that:

8.3.a.1. The health and safety of students attending the charter school is threatened;

8.3.a.2. The governing board and/or charter school failed to comply with the provisions of this policy, state code, or federal law.

8.3.a.3. The governing board and/or charter school committed a material violation of any of the terms, conditions, standards, or procedures required in the charter contract;

8.3.a.4. The charter school failed to meet the performance expectations set forth in the charter contract.

8.3.a.5. The governing board and/or charter school failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or

8.3.a.6. The governing board and/or charter school violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not exempted.

8.3.b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-9(d), the authorizer and governing board shall include in the charter contract a procedural process to be followed if an authorizer determines revocation of the charter contract is warranted. At a minimum, that process shall include the following:

8.3.b.1. Information that must be included in authorizer's initial decision to revoke the charter contract;

8.3.b.2. How the authorizer will notify the governing board of the initial decision to revoke the charter contract and the reasons for the revocation;

8.3.b.3. The timeframe for the governing board to provide a written response, documentation, and testimony as to why the charter contract should not be revoked;

8.3.b.4. The process and timeframe for the governing board to request a public hearing;

8.3.b.5. A requirement that the authorizer will consider any written response, documentation, testimony, and recorded public hearing prior to rendering a final decision on the revocation of the charter contract;

8.3.b.6. The information that must be included in the authorizer's final decision on whether to revoke the charter contract; and

8.3.b.7. The timeframe for the authorizer to render a final decision on whether to revoke the charter contract.

8.3.c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(g) and (i), the rationale for revocation of a charter contract and closure of the charter school shall be stated in a resolution adopted by the authorizer in an open meeting and by resolution stating the reasons for the revocation. Notwithstanding, nothing in this section prevents or discourages an authorizer from taking immediate action to suspend a charter contract to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students.

8.3.d. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(e), within 10 days of acting to revoke a charter contract, the authorizer shall report the action taken and reasons for the decision to the school's governing board, the state board, and any affected county boards, as applicable. A copy of the report shall be submitted at the same time to the state superintendent. The authorizer shall adopt a resolution in a public meeting containing its decision to revoke the charter contract as well as the accompanying reasons for taking such action.

8.3.e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(h), following an authorizer's action to revoke a charter contract, the charter school shall be closed. Pursuant to state law, charter schools may not operate without a valid charter contract in place.

8.4. Suspension of a Charter Contract and Immediate Closure for Extraordinary Circumstances.

8.4.a. An authorizer may immediately suspend a charter contract when continued operation of the charter school presents a clear and immediate threat to the health and safety of students.

8.4.b. A charter school shall be closed while its charter contract is suspended and may not reopen until the authorizer formally reinstates the charter contract.

8.4.c. If the charter school and its governing board do not remedy the cause of suspension or develop a plan to remedy it that is acceptable to the authorizer within 30 days, the authorizer may revoke the charter contract.

8.4.d. Authorizers and suspended charter schools must collaborate to provide an alternate setting

for students to receive adult supervision during the charter suspension.

8.5. Closure of a Charter School.

8.5.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(j), in the event a charter school is closed for any reason, the authorizer and governing board shall follow the process outlined in the charter contract for closing the school. To ensure a smooth and orderly closure and transition for students and parents, the WVDE will oversee and assist where needed and appropriate in the closure process to ensure the following items are accomplished:

8.5.a.1. Timely notification to parents;

8.5.a.2. Orderly transition of students and student records to new non-charter or charter schools.

8.5.a.3. Proper disposition of school funds, property and assets in the following order: (1) to satisfy outstanding payroll obligations for employees of the charter school; (2) to satisfy creditors of the charter school, and (3) remaining funds, property, or assets shall transfer to the authorizing county board. If the assets of the charter school are insufficient to pay all the parties to whom the charter school owes compensation, the prioritization of assets may be altered by decree of a court of law.

8.5.c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(h), when the charter is revoked or not renewed for a school that began as a conversion charter school, the county board with authority over the district in which the school is located may return it to non-charter public school status.

8.5.d. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(k), if a charter school is subject to closure or transition back to a non-charter public school, an authorizer may remove at will at any time any or all of the members of the charter school governing board if deemed necessary to ensure a smooth and orderly closure or transition. If the authorizer removes members of the governing board such that it can no longer function, the authorizer shall be empowered to take any further necessary and proper acts connected with closure or transition of the charter school in the name and interest of the charter school.

§126-79-9. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention.

9.1. Purpose.

9.1.a. To fulfill the legislative intent of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq., charter schools must remain an open and reasonable option to all students, except as identified in W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(6) in the case of charter schools with an educational mission focused on serving students with special needs. Efforts to recruit, enroll, and retain students must align with this objective.

9.1.b. Students must have the ability to transfer between charter and non-charter public schools without impairing their ability to graduate high school on time. To this end, authorizers and governing boards are responsible for working collaboratively to translate student credits between the two schools and ensuring transferring students and parents understand what coursework will be required to graduate at the receiving school, be it a charter or non-charter public school. The determination of grade levels for transferring students shall be based on what is age and educationally appropriate.

9.1.c. The authorizer and governing board must agree to and include in the charter contract

provisions, consistent with the requirements of this section, relating to a charter school's primary recruitment area, preferences to be used in a lottery, enrollment processes and timelines, and student transfer processes.

9.2. Recruitment and Retention.

9.2.a. Primary Recruitment Area.

9.2.a.1. Charter school applications must include a defined primary recruitment area. The primary recruitment area shall be based, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11, on the charter school's estimated facility and program capacity. The primary recruitment area for a charter school may include territory from more than one county. When the primary recruitment area includes territory from more than one county, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(2), the county boards with concurrent jurisdiction over such territories must work together as the authorizer.

9.2.a.2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11, the primary recruitment area of a charter school is a geographic area within which students reside in the primary recruitment area may receive preference for enrollment in the charter school as outlined in section 9.2.b. of this policy.

9.2.a.3. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(4), the primary recruitment area is defined in the charter contract based on the initial proposed primary recruitment area outlined in the application as required by W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(7).

9.2.a.3.A. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(5), the primary recruitment area is open to annual revision based on the facility and program capacity of the charter school. The determination of said capacity is made by the governing board of the charter school in conjunction with its authorizer. The capacity determination shall define capacity by school, grade level, and/or special need preference category to the extent necessary to make it clear and transparent the number of enrollment slots available to a prospective student interested in a particular charter school.

9.2.a.3.B. The governing board and authorizer shall consider how any changes to the primary recruitment area will impact the ability of the charter school to execute its educational mission, provide required services to students, and ensure safe facilities. Changes in primary recruitment area must be made and agreed upon by the governing board of the charter school and its authorizer no later than January 1 of the year in which the change shall go into effect.

9.2.a.3.C. In determining the primary recruitment area, the governing board of the charter school and the authorizer shall consider the potential impact of the primary recruitment area on separation along the lines of student characteristics including, but not limited to, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or prior academic achievement.

9.2.a.4. Notwithstanding the defined primary recruitment area included in a charter contract, if more than one-third of the students enrolled at the charter school are from a single county outside the jurisdiction of the authorizing county board of education, the county board of education with jurisdiction over such county shall be given the option to join as an authorizer of the charter school. If a county board does decide to join as an authorizer, the charter contract shall be modified to include the county board of education as a party and to otherwise update as necessary to make clear each party's duties and responsibilities.

9.2.b. Establishment of Enrollment Preferences.

9.2.b.1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(9), a conversion charter school shall guarantee enrollment to all students who previously enrolled in the non-charter public school and shall adopt and maintain a policy that gives enrollment preference to students who reside within the attendance zone as established prior to the conversion of the school. Enrollment beyond guaranteed enrollment shall follow the enrollment process for all charter schools outlined below, subject to the above attendance area preference and other preferences in the charter contract.

9.2.b.2. The governing board of a charter school and its authorizer(s) shall agree to the specific preferences and the order of preferences in the charter contract.

9.2.b.3. A preference for students enrolled in the charter school in the previous school year must be included in the charter contract to provide educational stability for these students.

9.2.b.4. A preference for children who reside within the primary recruitment area must be included in the charter contract in line with the intent of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. to expand the educational options available to students and families under the jurisdiction of the authorizer(s).

9.2.b.5. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(7), charter schools must establish enrollment preferences for:

9.2.b.5.A. Students enrolled in the charter school the previous school year; and;

9.2.b.5.B. Children who reside within the school's primary recruitment area.

9.2.b.6. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(7), charter schools may establish enrollment preferences for:

9.2.b.6.A. Children who are siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school;

9.2.b.6.B. Children with special needs, including but not limited to, at-risk students, English learners, students with severe disciplinary problems at a non-charter public school, or students involved with the juvenile justice system; and

9.2.b.6.C. Children of governing board members and full-time employees of the charter school as long as the number of students enrolled under this preference constitutes no more than five percent of the school's total student enrollment.

9.2.b.7. Preferences for students with special needs must define the documentation required to qualify for this preference. Documentation requirements must be minimally intensive to afford access to students with special needs and their families independent of their access to the resources necessary to complete documentation.

9.2.c. Recruitment Activities.

9.2.c.1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(1), the charter school shall engage in

comprehensive publicity about the school throughout its primary recruitment area. Publicity shall include easy-to-understand information about the school, its educational mission, its educational program, and any focus on students with special needs. The charter school shall make all reasonable efforts to reach students in or entering the grade levels it serves and their families. Publicity and other recruitment activities shall describe, in plain language, the processes and timelines for student application and enrollment.

9.2.c.2. Charter schools must publicize their offerings and actively recruit students in their primary recruitment area annually. Publicity and recruitment activities must provide families in the primary recruitment area with ample opportunity to complete the required student application prior to the deadline.

9.2.c.3. Charter schools must prioritize outreach to students with special needs that qualify them for an enrollment preference at the charter school as well as their families.

9.2.c.4. Such activities shall be designed to welcome all students and families regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, religion, home language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, other exceptionality, and prior academic performance and disciplinary record.

9.2.c.5. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(1), a county school board shall provide or publicize to parents and the general public information about charter schools with primary recruitment areas wholly or partially contained in the county as an enrollment option to the same extent and through the same means that the county provides and publicizes information about non-charter public schools in the county.

9.2.d. Enrollment and Retention Review.

9.2.d.1. On an annual basis, the governing board of a charter school and its authorizer shall review student enrollment, turnover, and transfer at the charter school. The purpose of the review is to ensure the school is providing welcoming and positive educational environment for all students and their families within the primary recruitment area and/or eligible for enrollment preference based on special needs.

9.2.d.2. The enrollment review will compare the demographics of students enrolled in a charter school to surrounding non-charter public schools under the authorizer's jurisdiction. There are no hard benchmarks that trigger action and differences in student demographics are not themselves a reason for concrete actions. However, significant and persistent differences demand further exploration by the charter school in collaboration with its authorizer. These collaborative efforts should aim to guard against charter school enrollment contributing to nearby schools having divergent demographics, which runs counter to the spirit of W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(6). Enrollment reviews will consider enrollment of subgroups defined by characteristics including, but not limited, socioeconomic status, sex, race, ethnicity, disability, other exceptionality, and prior academic performance and disciplinary record.

9.2.d.3. The turnover review will explore overall turnover rates and the turnover rates for student subgroups. Student turnover – where a student transfers out of a charter school in between school years – is an inherent characteristic of charter schools in which students and parents/families/caregivers exercise choice over enrollment. However, excessive turnover – either overall or among specific student subgroups – is a warning sign that the charter school is failing to provide a significant segment of students with a positive learning environment. The purpose of the review is to identify instances of excessive

turnover among all students or specific subgroups and outline steps to remediate the situation. In instances of problematic turnover, the charter school must work with its authorizer to create a positive and welcoming learning environment for all students. The review shall consider turnover for all students and student subgroups.

9.2.d.4. The mid-year transfer review will explore overall rates of mid-year transfers from a charter school and this rate for different student subgroups. A high rate of mid-year transfers is a sign that the charter school is failing to provide students with a positive, welcoming learning environment. Examining differential rates for various student subgroups helps ensure that average rates do not mask issues specific to certain subgroups at a charter school. The purpose of the review is to identify instances of excessive mid-year transfer among all students or specific subgroups and outline steps to remediate the situation. In instances of problematic mid-year transfer, the charter school must work with its authorizer to create a positive and welcoming learning environment for all students. The review shall consider mid-year transfers for all students and student subgroups defined characteristics including but not limited to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, home language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, other exceptionality, or prior academic performance and disciplinary record, when applicable and subject to data availability.

9.2.d.5. As a result of the student enrollment, turnover, and mid-year transfer reviews, authorizers may request charter schools to prepare a corrective action plan to remedy concerning trends for review and approval by the authorizer. Upon approval, the authorizer shall monitor the implementation of the plan by the charter school. If the charter school does not remedy the concerning student enrollment, turnover, and/or transfer trends through its corrective action plan, the authorizer has the authority to take such action it deems as necessary to address the concerns and may recommend that the charter school appear before the WVBE to discuss the situation and develop appropriate remedies.

9.3. Charter School Enrollment.

9.3.a. Annual target size announced by January 1 of each year.

9.3.a.1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(5), the capacity of a charter school will be determined annually by the governing board of the charter school in conjunction with its authorizer. The capacity determination shall include both the overall enrollment capacity for a charter school as well as enrollment capacities by grade level within the charter school. The sum of sub-school capacities may exceed the overall capacity to account for variation in grade level enrollment. To allow for planning for both the charter school and public schools, the enrollment capacity must be agreed upon by the governing board of the charter school and its authorizer no later than January 1 of the year for which it will go into effect. Notwithstanding this annual deadline, the governing board of a charter school and its authorizer(s) may engage in cooperative planning to set multi-year target enrollments to guide long-term strategy and decision-making.

9.3.b. The Enrollment Timeline and Process.

9.3.b.1. The governing board of the charter school and its authorizer(s) shall agree upon an initial and annual enrollment process in their charter contract, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(7). This agreement shall clearly define the responsibilities of the charter school when it comes to managing the enrollment process, verifying student enrollment preferences, and conducting the enrollment lottery, if necessary, as well as the role of the authorizer in overseeing these processes.

9.3.b.2. The primary round of charter school student enrollment applications, lottery, and enrollment shall conclude by May 1 of each year to allow charter and non-charter public schools to plan appropriately for the upcoming year. In the initial year of a charter school's operation, this also establishes an initial enrollment to use to project funding levels. Subsequent enrollments for a given school year shall be subject to available capacity, student transfers, etc.

9.3.b.3. A charter school must make its student enrollment application available to the public at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.

9.3.b.3.A. The purpose of the student enrollment application is to allow students and parents to declare their desire to enroll in a charter school. The student enrollment application should promote an application process that is accessible to all students and families.

9.3.b.3.B. The student enrollment application is open to all students of the appropriate age or grade level in West Virginia, though some students will have preferences that make it more likely they will be able to enroll.

9.3.b.3.C. The student enrollment application must collect basic student information necessary for enrollment as well as to identify and document enrollment preferences.

9.3.b.3.D. The student enrollment application cannot include essay questions, admissions tests, or other barriers to enrollment that demand the demonstration of high achievement. Academic, discipline, or other education-related data may only be collected for schools with a preference for students with special needs that need to use such data to determine student eligibility for the preference.

9.3.b.4. Student applicants shall be offered enrollment at the charter school if:

9.3.b.4.A. The number of qualified student applicants to a charter school for a particular grade level is less than the capacity for that grade level;

9.3.b.4.B. The number of overall student applicants to a charter school is less than its overall enrollment capacity; and

9.3.b.5. If these conditions are met, student enrollment at the charter school is open. All student applicants shall be offered enrollment. Additional students (i.e., those who did not apply prior to the application deadline) may enroll based on space availability and the order in which they apply.

9.3.b.6. If either of the above conditions is not met, an enrollment lottery shall determine the order in which additional students are offered enrollment.

9.3.b.7. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(8), enrollment lotteries shall be conducted in open meetings and involve procedures and timelines that support equal and open access for all students.

9.3.b.7.A. Enrollment lotteries may be conducted using computer-based randomization software. If randomization software is used, it must produce audit records verifiable by the WVDE.

9.3.b.7.B. The outcome of the random lottery is a priority ordering for students for enrollment

in a charter school.

9.3.b.7.B.1. The random lottery shall occur during the open meeting with the results announced and displayed publicly.

9.3.b.7.B.2. Students apply for enrollment in particular grade levels within a charter school. As such, enrollment lotteries will be separate for each grade level but must be conducted at one time in a meeting open to the public. Students can participate in the lottery for multiple programs within the same school.

9.3.b.7.B.3. To incorporate the enrollment preferences in the charter contract, the random lottery will be stratified by grade level and enrollment preferences, including those without preference.

9.3.b.7.B.4. Within a given grade level, students are placed in the enrollment preference group with the highest level of preference as defined in the charter contract. Within each group, they are ordered by random lottery. Each preference group is then added to the enrollment order starting with the highest preference group to form the enrollment list.

9.3.b.7.B.5. Students who have a number on the list less than or equal to the capacity of the grade level are added to the preliminary enrollment pool.

9.3.b.7.B.6. If the number of students in the preliminary enrollment pool is less than or equal to the overall school capacity, all students in the preliminary enrollment pool will be offered enrollment.

9.3.b.7.B.7. If the number of students in the preliminary enrollment pool exceeds the overall school capacity, students in the preliminary pool enter a random lottery within students in their preference group but not combining students across grade level.

9.3.b.7.B.8. Within preference groups, students are ordered by random lottery. Students are then added to the final enrollment list in this order starting with the students in the highest preference group.

9.3.b.7.B.9. Students with a number on the final enrollment list less than or equal to the capacity of the school are added to the final enrollment pool and will be offered enrollment.

9.3.b.7.B.10. Students not initially offered enrollment are added to the top of the waitlist in their random lottery order.

9.3.b.7.B.11. Each student offered enrollment has the ability to opt out of enrollment. As students opt out of enrollment, students on the waitlist are offered enrollment, beginning with the first student at the top of the waitlist.

9.4. Student Discipline.

9.4.a. Charter schools shall define and publicize their own student behavior and discipline policies as approved by their governing boards. Provisions concerning student expulsion and out-of-school suspension must be incorporated into the charter contract.

9.4.b. Student expulsions from a charter school shall be approved by the governing board of the charter school. In accordance with federal law, students with disabilities must be provided procedural safeguards and due process rights and procedures in accordance with IDEA and WVBE Policy 2419.

9.4.b.1. Students expelled from the charter schools remain the responsibility of the charter school. The charter school is responsible for providing the student with educational instruction and other legally required services to expelled students.

9.4.b.2. Charter schools may contract with county school boards to provide students expelled from charter schools with instruction and other legally required services at alternative education settings operated by the county school board. In such cases, the charter schools have the affirmative obligation to provide the receiving county school districts and alternative education settings with reports on students' academic and disciplinary standing as well as potential instructional materials to reduce the academic disruption for the students before their return to the charter schools.

9.4.b.3. When a student returns from a period of expulsion from a charter school, the student has the right to return to the expelling charter school. The student may also choose to return to a non-charter public school at the end of their expulsion.

9.4.c. Students receiving out-of-school suspensions from charter schools must still receive educational instruction and other legally required services during the term of their suspension.

9.4.c.1. Charter schools may contract with county school boards to provide their students with instruction and other legally required services at alternative education settings operated by the county school board. In such cases, the charter schools have the affirmative obligation to provide the receiving county school district and alternative education setting with a report on the student's academic standing and disciplinary circumstances as well as potential instructional materials to reduce the academic disruption for the student before their return to the charter school. Any services for which a charter school contracts with a school district shall be provided by the district at cost and may be negotiated as a separate agreement from the charter contract.

9.5. Transfers to/from a charter school.

9.5.a. Transfers to charter schools.

9.5.a.1. Students who wish to transfer to charter schools between school years will follow the enrollment process defined in the above Section 9.3 of this policy.

9.5.a.2. Students who wish to transfer to charter schools mid-school year must complete the charter school application. If enrollment at the charter school is below capacity overall and in the grade level to which the student is applying, the charter school shall offer enrollment to the student. If the school is at capacity, the student shall be added to the waitlist.

9.5.b. Transfers from charter schools.

9.5.b.1. Students who wish to transfer from a charter school to a non-charter public school between the school years shall be enrolled at a non-charter public school based on the standard

enrollment process, considering both school attendance zones and open enrollment policies.

9.5.b.2. Students who wish to transfer from a charter school to a non-charter public school during the school year shall be enrolled at a non-charter public school based on the standard enrollment process, considering both school attendance zones and open enrollment policies.

9.5.c. Responsibilities of sending and receiving schools.

9.5.c.1. When students transfer between charter public and non-charter public schools, educators at both schools have an affirmative responsibility to collaborate to smooth the transition for students.

9.5.c.2. Electronic records in WVEIS shall automatically transfer to the receiving school. Sending schools shall compile other relevant educational records and transfer them to the receiving school in a manner compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), state law regarding student privacy and data protection, and W. Va. 126CSR136, WVBE Policy 4350, Procedures for the Collection, Maintenance, and Disclosure of Student Information.

9.5.c.3. Receiving schools shall make every effort to accept and recognize in progress grades and credits earned at sending schools based on the demonstrated achievement and education needs of transferring students.

9.5.c.3.A. Pursuant to §18-5G-11(b), non-charter public schools shall accept grades and credits earned by the student in courses or instructional programs at the charter school in a uniform and consistent manner and according to the same criteria that are used to accept academic grades and credits from other non-charter public schools or that consider content competency when appropriate due to differences in curriculum delivery, instructional methods and strategies, or course designations and sequence.

9.5.c.3.B. In the spirit of furthering the best interests of students, charter schools shall accept transfer credits from non-charter public schools or other charter schools using similarly uniform and consistent processes as those outlined above.

§126-79-10. Educational Reporting Requirements.

10.1. Flexibility, innovation, and accountability are the key underpinnings to fulfilling the charter schools' promise of increasing educational options in order to improve student outcomes. To hold a charter school accountable, its authorizer must have access to relevant evidence about the charter school's results. Straightforward reporting requirements and processes allow this access with minimum burden on authorizers and charter schools. This access helps ensure that charter schools are held accountable to their educational mission, their ability to improve student outcomes, and their promise of developing successful strategies for diffusion across public schools.

10.2. Student data.

10.2.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(7) and §18-5G-11(c), charter schools must comply with The Student Data Accessibility, Transparency, and Accountability Act pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-2-5h.

10.2.b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(8) and §18-5G-11(c), charter schools will have access to and shall use WVEIS, and any successor electronic education information system, maintained by the WVDE for the purpose of reporting required information.

10.2.c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(d), charter schools shall certify the following data to the WVDE and to the county board of the school districts in which the charter school is located: student enrollment; average daily attendance; student participation in the national school lunch program, special education, vocational education, CTE, gifted education, advanced placement and dual credit courses, and federal programs; and other education data in the same manner as county boards of education.

10.2.d. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(6), charter schools shall administer the same student assessments required of non-charter public schools. However, in accord with W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(6) and W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(9), nothing in this policy precludes charter schools from establishing additional student assessment measures or other student or school performance measures.

10.2.e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(9) and §18-5G-11(c), charter schools shall report information on student and school performance to parents, policy-makers, and the general public in the same manner as non-charter public school utilizing the electronic format established by the WVDE. This includes reporting all data necessary to participate in the state's accountability system.

10.2.f. In order to execute the monitoring, oversight, and accountability responsibilities established in W. Va. Code §18-5G-6, authorizers will have electronic access to the same set of records in WVEIS and any subsequent replacements as county school districts would have for non-charter public schools in their jurisdiction. This access extends to authorizers even when a charter school is located outside the geographic boundaries of the authorizer, as in the case of co-authorized charter schools.

10.3. Educational Practices and Innovations Reporting.

10.3.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b), establishing charter schools in West Virginia is intended to both promote innovative educational methods, practices, and programs and encourage the replication of successful strategies from charter schools.

10.3.b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(6), the WVBE is required to report on successful innovations applied in authorized charter schools which may be replicated in non-charter public schools as well as how non-charter public schools may implement these innovations.

10.3.c. In order to achieve these aims, the WVDE will develop and maintain a system for recording innovative educational practices. Charter schools must complete required reporting within this system in order to fulfill the legislative intent noted above.

§126-79-11. Education Service Providers.

11.1. Purpose. The role of an ESP is to manage the day-to-day education of students in charter schools. The specific functions performed by an individual ESP are defined by its contract with an authorized charter school's governing board. Notwithstanding any contrary provision in the ESP's contract, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(2)(C), the governing board retains final authority and oversight over the charter school.

11.2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(c), if a charter applicant intends to contract with an ESP to be involved with the operations of its proposed charter school, the charter school application must include the following information relating to the ESP:

11.2.a. Evidence of success in serving student populations similar to the targeted population, including demonstrated academic achievement and growth as well as successful management of nonacademic school functions, if applicable;

11.2.b. Student performance data and financial audit reports for all current and past charter schools;

11.2.c. Documentation of and explanation for any actions taken, legal or otherwise, against any of its charter schools for academic, financial, or ethical concerns;

11.2.d. The proposed duration of the ESP's intended contract with the charter school's governing board;

11.2.e. The proposed annual fees and any other amounts to be paid to the ESP;

11.2.f. The roles and responsibilities of the governing board, the charter school staff, and the ESP;

11.2.g. The scope of services and resources to be provided by the ESP;

11.2.h. Performance evaluation measures and timelines;

11.2.i. Methods of contract oversight and enforcement by the governing board;

11.2.j. Investment disclosure, including, but not limited to:

11.2.j.1. Any interests or entanglements in the ESP, its parent companies, or subsidiaries held by members of the governing board;

11.2.j.2. Any investors, interest holders, subsidiaries, etc. in the ESP;

11.2.j.3. Conditions for renewal and termination of the contract; and

11.2.j.4. Disclosure and explanation of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the governing board and the proposed ESP or any affiliated business entities.

11.2.k. As part of the evaluation of charter school applications, authorizers shall consider the information provided in determining whether the ESP is reasonably likely to succeed in their context. In doing so, the authorizer may consider the following:

11.2.k.1. The ESP'S demonstrated success in improving student outcomes relative to other students with similar incoming achievement and demographics to those it serves in existing schools;

11.2.k.2. The ESP'S demonstrated ability to successfully manage school operations and finances;

11.2.k.3. The ESP's involvement in part of a charter school network or network of networks that has demonstrated success improving student outcomes relative to similar students.

11.2.k.4. The ESP's experience serving students and communities is similar to the one it plans to serve.

11.2.k.5. The ESP's identification of key members of its school leadership team (e.g., instructional leader, operational leader, etc.) and whether those leaders possess the experience, qualifications, and past success that make them reasonably likely to succeed.

11.2.k.6. The ESP and governing board's adequate address of any past actions, legal or otherwise, against the ESP or any schools or other entities that it operates;

11.2.k.7. The ESP and governing board's tailoring of adequate educational and business plans to the local context in which it will operate to create a reasonable likelihood that the school will achieve its educational mission;

11.2.k.8. The governing board's plans to provide adequate educational, operational, and financial services not provided by the ESP;

11.2.k.9. If the ESP is or is a subsidiary of a for-profit entity, the terms of the contract that generate profits are not excessive;

11.2.k.10. The governing board's draft of reasonable oversight and accountability methods to address performance concerns prior to issues rising to the attention of the authorizer;

11.2.k.11. The ESP and governing board's establishment of adequate additional oversight and monitoring plans if the proposed charter school relies heavily on educational methods with less direct contact between educators and students.

11.3. Reporting Requirements for ESPs.

11.3.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(4), ESPs shall provide monthly detailed budgets to the charter school's governing board.

11.3.b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(6)(ix), ESPs shall provide the charter school's governing board with an annual review of educational and operational practices that the ESP found particularly effective for delivering improved student outcomes. The governing board shall report these practices to its authorizer and the state as part of annual reporting on successful innovations as required by state code.

§126-79-12. Finances.

12.1. Purpose

12.1.a. State law (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5) outlines the funding of charter schools as well as tools to mitigate the fiscal impact on county school districts. Clearly articulating the financial rules and processes for charter schools will help applicants complete thorough applications and county boards determine the

financial viability of applications and plan for the fiscal effects on county school districts where charter schools operate.

12.2. Portion of Net Enrollment (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)).

12.2.a. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a), 90% of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance follows the student to the charter school. The per pupil total basic foundation allowance amount is calculated annually by the WVDE by dividing each county's total basic foundation allowance (Step 8 of the Public School Support Plan (PSSP)) by the county's adjusted net enrollment for state aid funding purposes. This amount differs by county board of education and changes annually.

12.2.b. State aid funding for county boards of education is based on the prior year enrollment. For example, funding for the 2020-21 school year is based on student enrollment in the 2019-20 school year.

12.2.c. In the initial year of existence for a charter school, the charter school will receive 90% of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance for each pupil based on a projected enrollment count for the initial year as determined by the primary round of charter school enrollment (see section 9 by no later than the preceding May 15 for the initial year of operations, subsequently adjusted to the charter school's certified October 1 (second month) student enrollment full-time equivalency count. To determine which county board of education is responsible to pay the per pupil allocation to the charter school, the WVDE will determine the actual county of enrollment for each enrolled pupil for the prior school year and will calculate the amount to be paid by each county board of education to the charter school based on the student's FTE status at the charter school. If the student was not enrolled in a county school system the prior year, no county board of education received state aid funding for that pupil for the initial year of existence for the charter school. Although no state aid funds were received for the student, the county of residence for the student did receive property tax funding for the pupil and therefore must pay 90% of the local share amount per pupil to the charter school.

12.2.d. Once a student is enrolled in a charter school, that student will be included in the charter school's certified October 1 (second month) student enrollment moving forward. All charter schools are considered a school under a specific county board of education, so after the initial year of operations, the state aid funding will flow through the PSSP to the county board of education.

12.2.d.1. Accordingly, after the initial year of operations of the charter school, the payment of the 90% of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance will be made by that county board of education to the charter school based on the charter school's student enrollment count included in the PSSP calculations for the particular school year. For example, if the charter school reported a student enrollment of 100 FTE in the initial year of operations, the state aid funding calculations for the second year of operations of the charter school were based on that enrollment count and the county board of education will only receive funds from the state based on that 100 FTE count. The per pupil allocation paid to the charter school in the second year of operations will be based on 100 students, regardless of the charter school's actual student enrollment in the second year since that is all the funding that the county board of education will have received on behalf of the charter school. County boards of education are not expected to provide funding to a charter school that they have not received.

12.2.e. Under the provisions of W. Va. Code §18-9A-15, county boards of education are eligible for increased enrollment funding if they experience an increase in net student enrollment over the previous year. Eligibility for the increased enrollment funding shall also be extended to charter schools. The

calculations under W. Va. Code §18-9A-15 will be modified in a manner such that each county board of education's eligibility for the increased enrollment funding will be determined exclusive of any charter school student enrollment for their county. Each charter school shall be evaluated for eligibility based on the charter school's net student enrollment for the current year as compared to the prior year. Any increased enrollment funding allocation calculated for a charter school shall be added to the amount of the allocation for the authorizing county board of education.

12.2.e.1. Once the increased enrollment funds are distributed to the county board of education, the county board of education will transmit 90% of the total basic foundation allowance amount to the charter school within 30 days of receipt of the funds from the WVDE. The county board of education shall also be responsible for transferring 90% of the local share amount per pupil to the charter school for the FTE increase in the charter school's net student enrollment for the current year as compared to the prior year, but those local share amounts shall be spread over the remainder of the school year in accordance with the disbursement timing schedule of the charter contract.

12.2.f. County boards of education receive state aid funding annually from the WVDE in accordance with the expenditure schedule approved by the State Budget Office. The payments are generally sent four times per month and the monthly totals vary based on the cash flow outlook for the State of West Virginia. County boards of education also receive regular levy tax collections monthly from the county sheriff, but the amounts fluctuate greatly between months based on the property tax due dates for taxpayers. Because of the timing of these sources of funds, authorizers generally would not have the cash flow to pay the total per pupil amounts due to the charter schools in one lump sum at the beginning of the school year. Accordingly, the timing of the payments to the charter school shall be negotiated by the charter school and the authorizer county board of education, and a disbursement timing schedule should be placed in the charter contract so that both parties can accurately project cash flow.

12.3. Transportation Allowances (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(a)).

12.3.a. The calculation of the allowance for student transportation under W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 is based largely on the actual student transportation expenditures incurred by the county board of education. By requiring county boards of education to provide 90% of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance to the charter school, which includes the allowance for student transportation, county boards of education are required to provide funds to the charter school without a corresponding reduction in their actual transportation expenses. W. Va. Code §8-5G-5(a)(1) provides that the calculations under W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 may be modified to account for these situations to provide additional funding to the county boards of education.

12.3.b. In situations where the charter school does not provide transportation to students but the county board of education must provide 90% of the transportation allowance to the charter school and in situations where the county boards of education provides the transportation on behalf of the charter school but must still provide 90% of the transportation allowance to the charter school, the calculations under the PSSP in W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 will be modified by adding to the county board's total allowance for student transportation the equivalent of the LEA's prior year transportation allowance per pupil multiplied by the charter school FTE student enrollment being utilized in the PSSP calculations for the current fiscal year.

12.3.c. In situations where the charter school provides transportation to students through means other than the county board, the calculations in W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 will be modified to add the charter

school's actual transportation expenditures to those of the county board in the allowance for student transportation calculation.

12.4. Current Expenses Allowances (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(1)).

12.4.a. The calculation of the allowance for current expense under W. Va. Code §18-9A-9(1) is based largely on the actual current expenses (operations and maintenance expenditures) incurred by the county board of education. By requiring the county board of education to provide 90% of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance to the charter school, which includes the allowance for current expense, county boards of education are required to provide funds to the charter school without a corresponding reduction in their actual current expenses. W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(1) provides that the calculations under W. Va. Code §18-9A-9(1) may be modified to account for these situations to provide additional funding to the county boards of education.

12.4.b. The calculation of the allowance for current expense under the PSSP contained in W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 will be modified to add the charter school's actual operations and maintenance expenditures to those of the county board of education and to add the square footage of the charter school to the square footage of the county board of education in the allowance for current expense calculation. Inclusion of the charter school's expenditures and square footage in the calculation ensures consistency with the student enrollment utilized in the calculation, which will also include the charter school student enrollment.

12.5. PEIA Funding.

12.5.a. W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(e) permits the WVBE to address unforeseen circumstances in the implementation of charter schools. While the provisions of W. Va. Code §5-16-2 were modified to allow charter schools to participate in the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) and the statutory language in W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(7) allows the charter school to manage employee participation in insurance plans, the Legislature has not addressed funding for PEIA insurance for charter school employees. The funding for county board of education employees to participate in PEIA is outside of the total basic foundation allowance under the PSSP and is provided directly to PEIA by the WVDE pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-9A-24 on behalf of the county boards of education, so the funds being remitted by the county board of education to the charter school do not include funding for PEIA.

12.5.b. If a charter school elects to provide health insurance coverage to employees using PEIA, the WVDE will calculate the amount of PEIA funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school and provide an allocation on behalf of the charter school directly to PEIA in the same manner in which the allocations are provided to PEIA on behalf of the county boards of education.

12.5.c. In the initial year of operation of a charter school, the WVDE will calculate the amount of PEIA funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:

12.5.c.1. Determine the number of charter school students that were enrolled in each county board of education in the previous year.

12.5.c.2. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel positions, and professional student support personnel positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on each county's population density category.

12.5.c.3. Multiply the number of total positions attributable to the charter school students by the average employer PEIA premium for the county board of education.

12.5.c.4. Multiply the subtotal from 12.5.c.3 above by 90%.

12.5.c.5. Reduce the county board of education's calculated PEIA allowance by the amounts derived in 12.5.c.4 above.

12.5.c.6. The charter school's PEIA allowance is the total of the amount derived in 12.5.c.4 for all county boards of education that had charter school students enrolled in the previous year.

12.5.c.7. The PEIA allowance for the charter schools is subject to the same annual reallocation process based on updated employer premium rates as the county boards of education.

12.5.d. In subsequent years, the WVDE will calculate the amount of PEIA funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:

12.5.d.1. Determine the number of charter school students that were enrolled in the authorizing county board of education in the previous year.

12.5.d.2. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel positions, and professional student personnel support positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on the authorizer county's population density category.

12.5.d.3. Multiply the number of total positions attributable to the charter school students by the average employer PEIA premium for the authorizer county board of education.

12.5.d.4. Multiply the subtotal from 12.5.d.3 above by 90%.

12.5.d.5. Reduce the authorizer county board of education's calculated PEIA allowance by the amount derived in 12.5.d.4 above.

12.5.d.6. The charter school's PEIA allowance is equal to the amount of the reduction made to the authorizer county board of education from 12.5.d.5 above.

12.5.d.7. The PEIA allowance for the charter schools is subject to the same annual reallocation process based on updated employer premium rates as the county boards of education.

12.5.e. If a charter school does not elect to participate in PEIA, the unspent allocation for the charter school shall be treated by the WVDE the same as any unspent allocation for the county boards of education.

12.6. Retirement Funding.

12.6.a. W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(e) permits the WVBE to address unforeseen circumstances in the implementation of charter schools. While the provisions of W. Va. Code §18-7A-3 and §18-7B-2 were modified to allow charter schools to participate in the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and the

Teachers' Defined Contribution Retirement System (TDC) and the statutory language in W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(7) allows the charter school to manage employee participation in retirement, the Legislature has not addressed funding for retirement contributions for charter school employees. The funding for county board of education employees to participate in retirement is outside of the total basic foundation allowance under the PSSP and is provided directly to the West Virginia Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB) by the WVDE pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-9A-6a(b) on behalf of the county boards of education, so the funds being remitted by the county board of education to the charter school do not include funding for retirement.

12.6.b. If a charter school elects to participate in the TRS and TDC retirement plans provided by the CPRB, the WVDE will calculate the amount of retirement funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school and provide an allocation on behalf of the charter school directly to the CPRB in the same manner in which the allocations are provided to the CPRB on behalf of the county boards of education.

12.6.c. In the initial year of operation of a charter school, the WVDE will calculate the amount of retirement funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:

12.6.c.1. Determine the number of charter school students that were enrolled in each county board of education in the previous year.

12.6.c.2. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel positions, and professional student support personnel positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on each county's population density category.

12.6.c.3. For each category of personnel, multiply the number of positions calculated in 12.6.c.2 above by the average state minimum salary of for the county and county's average retirement contribution rate.

12.6.c.4. Add the total calculated in 12.6.c.3 above for each category of personnel to determine the total estimated retirement contribution attributable to charter school students.

12.6.c.5. Multiply the total from 12.6.c.4 above by 90%.

12.6.c.6. Reduce the county board of education's calculated retirement allowance by the amount derived in 12.6.c.5 above.

12.6.c.7. The charter school's retirement allowance is the total of the amounts derived in 12.6.c.5 for all county boards of education that had charter school students enrolled in the previous year.

12.6.d. In subsequent years, the WVDE will calculate the amount of retirement funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:

12.6.d.1. Determine the number of charter school students that were enrolled in the authorizer county board of education in the previous year.

12.6.d.2. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel

positions, and professional student support personnel positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on the authorizer county's population density category.

12.6.d.3. For each category of personnel, multiply the number of positions calculated in 12.6.d.2 above by the average state minimum salary for the authorizer county board of education and the authorizer county's average retirement contribution rate.

12.6.d.4. Add the total calculated in 12.6.d.3 above for each category of personnel to determine the total estimated retirement contribution attributable to the charter school students.

12.6.d.5. Multiply the total from 12.6.d.4 above by 90%.

12.6.d.6. Reduce the authorizer county board of education's calculated retirement allowance by the amount derived in 12.6.d.5 above.

12.6.d.7. The charter school's retirement allowance is equal to the amount of the reduction made to the authorizer county board of education's retirement allowance determined in 12.6.d.5 above.

12.6.e. If a charter school does not elect to participate in the TRS and TDC plans sponsored by the CPRB, any unspent retirement allowance for the charter school shall be transferred to the CPRB to apply to the TRS unfunded retirement liability.

12.7. Federal Funds (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(3)).

12.7.a. The WVDE will follow all federal regulations with regards to funding for charter schools. The WVDE issues grants and provides federal funds for various federal programs, and the treatment of charter schools under the federal regulations varies depending on the specific federal program. Federal regulations also change on a regular basis. Accordingly, the specific treatment of charter schools under each federal program will not be included in WVBE policy to allow the WVDE to comply promptly with any changes in federal regulations related to charter schools.

12.8. Authorizers costs (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(d)).

12.8.a. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(i), each public charter school shall remit to its respective authorizer an oversight fee.

12.8.a.1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(d), the oversight fee charged by the authorizer county board of education shall be equal to one percent of the total per pupil funding amount for all charter school students, as calculated in Section 12.2 above.

12.8.a.2. The amount of the oversight fee shall be remitted by the charter school to the authorizer county board of education by no later than June 1 annually.

12.8.b. The WVDE will review the oversight fee structure annually to determine if the amount of the oversight fee is effective or if it needs adjusted by a sliding scale that considers the number of schools authorized, the number of students attending each school, etc. Recommendations to change the oversight fee structure will be made to the WVBE.

12.9. Accounting and Financial Reports (W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10)).

12.9.a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10), the charter school will meet the same accounting and financial requirements required of non-charter public schools, including but not limited to participation in the State Auditor's financial transparency website.

12.9.b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10), a charter school shall annually engage an external auditor to perform an independent audit of the school's finances. The charter school shall submit the audit report to its authorizer and the State Superintendent of Schools no later than nine months following the end of the fiscal year for which the audit is performed.

§126-79-13. Severability.

13.1. If any provision of this policy or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this policy.

FISCAL NOTE FOR PROPOSED RULES

Type of Rule: Legislative Interpretive Procedural

Agency: West Virginia Department of Education

Address: Sarah Stewart, Government Affairs Counsel

1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Building 6 Room 362

Charleston, WV 25305

Phone Number: 304-558-3667

Email: sarah.a.stewart@k12.wv.us

Fiscal Note Summary

Summarize in a clear and concise manner what impact this measure will have on costs and revenues of state government.

If a charter school is authorized under the provisions of W. Va. 126CSR##, Policy 3300, Public Charter Schools, there will be an increase to the costs to the state via the state aid formula and other line items within the education budget that a charter school may be included. There is no basis upon which to project those costs as they will be entirely dependent on the type, nature, and characteristics of the charter schools that are authorized.

Fiscal Note Detail

Show over-all effect in Item 1 and 2, and in Item 3, give an explanation of breakdown by fiscal year, including long-range effect.

Fiscal Year			
Effect of Proposal	Current Increase / Decrease (use "-")	Next Increase / Decrease (use "-")	Fiscal Year (Upon Full Implementation)
1. Estimated Total Cost	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Personal Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Current Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Repairs & Alterations	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Assets	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Estimated Total Revenues	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

3. Explanation of above estimates (including long-range effect). Please include any increase or decrease in fees in your estimated total revenues.

There are no estimated increases or decreases in fees or West Virginia Department of Education revenue as a result of W. Va. 126CSR##, Policy 3300, Public Charter Schools.

Memorandum

Please identify any areas of vagueness, technical defects, reasons the proposed rule **would not** have a fiscal impact, and/or any special issues **not** captured elsewhere on this form.

No costs or revenue will be impacted by the adoption of W. Va. 126CSR##, Policy 3300, Public Charter Schools.

Signature of Agency Head or Authorized Representative



Date

10/31/19

Comment Response Form

Comment Period Ends:

NOTICE: *Comments, as submitted, shall be filed with the West Virginia Secretary of State's Office and open for public inspection and copying for a period of not less than five years.*

The following form is provided to assist those who choose to comment on **Policy 3300, Public Charter Schools**. Additional sheets may be attached, if necessary.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Title: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Please check the box below that best describes your role.

<input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Family
<input type="checkbox"/> Principal	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Member
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Support Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Service Personnel	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

§126-79-1. General.

§126-79-2. Purpose.

§126-79-3. Definitions.

§126-79-4. Charter School Application.

§126-79-5. Charter School Application Process.

§126-79-6. Charter Contract.

§126-79-7. Responsibilities of Parties to a Charter Contract.

§126-79-8. Process for Renewal and Revocation of Charter Contracts.

Comment Response Form

§126-79-9. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention.

§126-79-10. Educational Reporting Requirements.

§126-79-11. Education Service Providers.

§126-79-12. Finances.

§126-79-13. Severability.

Please direct all comments to:

Sarah Stewart
Government Affairs Counsel
Superintendent's Office
West Virginia Department of Education
Capitol Building 6, Room 362
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, WV 25305-0330
Email address: sarah.a.stewart@k12.wv.us
Fax No.: 304.558.0048